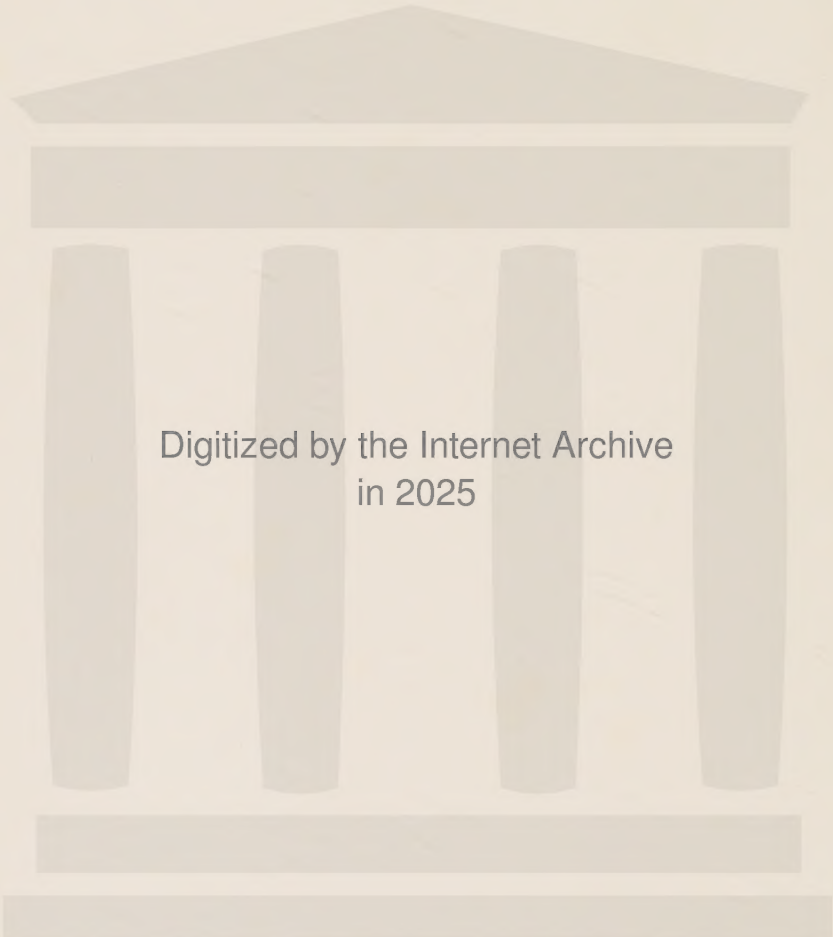
Von,

Merry Christmas 1976

Love,
Cheryl +
John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Abraham Lincoln

THE PRAIRIE YEARS

IN TWO VOLUMES

✦

Volume

2

Abraham Lincoln
THE PRAIRIE YEARS

✦

BY

CARL SANDBURG

✦

WITH 105 ILLUSTRATIONS FROM
PHOTOGRAPHS, AND MANY CARTOONS,
SKETCHES, MAPS, AND LETTERS

VOLUME TWO

NEW YORK
HARCOURT, BRACE & WORLD, INC.

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Renewed by Carl Sandburg
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Abraham Lincoln
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Chapter 95

In the Whig Almanac of 1854 Lincoln could read of strange contrasts in the kaleidoscope of history that year. Old Josiah Quincy had stood before the Whig State Convention in Boston that summer and told his fellow Whigs: "Slaveholders have multiplied their black cattle by the million; and are every day increasing their numbers, and extending their cattle field into the wilderness. Are we bound to be their field drivers and poundkeepers?" And Quincy answered that "common law" might require obedience but there was no "moral obligation" to obey the Fugitive Slave Law.

He sketched a scene, did old Josiah Quincy. "We have seen our Courthouse in chains, two battalions of dragoons, eight companies of artillery, twelve companies of infantry, the whole constabulary force of the city police, the entire disposable marine of the United States, with its artillery loaded for action, all marching in support of a Prætorian band, consisting of 120 friends and associates of the United States Marshal, with loaded pistols and drawn swords, and in military costume and array—for what purpose? To escort and conduct a poor trembling slave from a Boston Courthouse to the fetters and lash of his master! This display of military force the mayor of this city officially declared to be necessary."

In the same Whig Almanac of that year was the speech of Victor Hugo, a Frenchman exiled from France, speaking at the funeral of Jean Bosquet, also a Frenchman exiled from France. And Hugo had said in April: "We have seen him, an inflexible

exile, waste away among us, a yearning for home gnawing at his heart. The earth will soon cover him, his soul gone to the hopes of the tomb. Let him sleep here, this republican. Let the republic know that men will perish rather than forsake her. Let him sleep, this patriot, in the land of the stranger."

Hugo spoke of the sword, the ax, and scaffolds, the gallows removing revolutionaries. He looked to the future for "the deliverance of every nation, the enfranchisement of all mankind." He ended: "Friends, our sufferings give us a claim on Providence; God owes us a reward. Let us then cherish a manly faith and make our sacrifice with gladness. Oppressed of all nations, offer up your wounds. Poles, offer your misery; Hungarians offer your gibbet; Italians, offer your cross; heroic transported brothers of Cayenne, of Africa, offer your chains; exiles, offer your proscription; and thou, O martyr! offer thy death to the liberty of the human race! *Vive la république!*"

Thus the reprints of the Whig Almanac, published by the *New York Tribune,* then the most powerful and widely read newspaper in the country.

Such were a few glints. Men with a scorn of ease in life or ease in death were talking and talking, refusing to give up a dream that man is the most improbable of animals, kissing farewell to mother and home as though errands called, as though the drums of change on change drum eternally, and to live high is to follow those mystic drums.

Lincoln saw and heard. Dreams ran deep in him. He too wanted to look beyond his day and have men murmur of him, mention his name as one with a little streak of honest glory. He had so spoken to Josh Speed, once, and ten years later to Bill Herndon.

That want still lived in him, lived far under in him, in the deeper blue pools of him. It was one of his secrets as he touched elbows with people in Diller's drug store, in Canedy's, and mixed with men in shirt-sleeves around the public square in Springfield. On guard he had his horse sense, mathematics, and an eye for the comic.

Chapter 96

AROUND the public square of Springfield every day in 1854 came "movers." They drove in covered wagons, heading west for homesteads. They were pioneers. But to speak of them as "pioneers" was considered highfalutin. They were movers.

A Peoria newspaper that year counted 1,473 wagons in one month, movers going to Iowa. Twelve thousand emigrants arrived on railroad trains at Chicago in one week of that year. Three hundred houses were built in Davenport in a year. Though a building boom was on in Bloomington, its hotels sometimes could not accommodate all comers, and Lincoln one evening in that city went canvassing among private houses for a furnished room.

"How's things?" was a query. "Booming," was a reply. Flush times were on. Those incessant westbound wagons were a sign.

Cyrus H. McCormick, the farm-reaper man, had come up from Virginia, with letters of introduction from Stephen A. Douglas; McCormick located in Chicago, having decided it was to be the farm-machinery centre of the world. He said: "I made and sold 1,558 machines in 1854 with less than one-half of one per cent of returned machines. Three-fourths of these were combined reaping and mowing machines. I shall manufacture as near 3,000 machines for 1855 as I can."

That year the Illinois Central made the grade from Chicago to Galena. Six new states for the Union would be carved out in the Northwest, newspapers were saying. On the Great Plains north of the Missouri River, east of the Rockies, and west of the Great Lakes would come fifteen million people in forty years.

Millions of dollars were passing in money orders from America to Europe, the poor people of a new country trying to help the poorer people of the old countries. Edward Everett, of the Department of State, said on December 1, 1851, that official inquiry showed, "The emigrants to the United States, from Ireland alone, besides having subsisted themselves, have sent back to their kin-

dred, for the last three years, nearly five million dollars each year."

In that flush year and those boom times, the Midwest prairie state of Illinois was holding its annual state fair in Springfield, in the harvest month of October.

Shorthorn cattle were feeding in sheds where farmers by hundreds passed through, discussing whether it would pay to try to raise these high-class, high-bred cattle instead of scrubs without pedigree. A shorthorn bull drew particular attention; he had crossed the Atlantic Ocean and the Great Lakes on steamboats; his owner had a tent near by with tables, chairs, whisky, cigars, where farmers could sit and take cheer while they talked about the bull; some of the farmers had heard a caretaker of the bull say: "Thet bull's wuth his weight in gold. Ever sence he left old England, Queen Victoree's been cryin' her eyes out on account o' the loss o' thet calf, fer he was jist a calf then. Now you kin go up and down these sheds and see what a fambly he's got. All the gold in Californy couldn't buy his childern and grandchildern."

Of course the bull was not the only topic. There were sows, boars, stallions, mares, rams, ewes, hens, roosters, geese, ganders, ducks, drakes, turkeys, gobblers; peaches, apples, crab apples, pears, picked from sunny orchards and canned by farmers' wives; also jellies, jams, apple butter, peach marmalade; and wheat, oats, rye, each with its ticket naming the farmer who had raised the grain. And there was keen interest in the farmers named as receiving blue ribbons for the long yellow or golden red ears of corn they had raised.

To walk around among these exhibits, to see the horse races where runners, trotters, and pacers with Kentucky and Tennessee pedigrees competed on a mile track, and then to listen to the political speakers discussing "purr-ins-a-pulls" and "the Const-ti-too-shun"—this made a holiday for the farmers and city people who came

For many a young couple who came riding on a farm work-horse, the young man in front holding the bridle, the young woman

behind him, the two straddling a blanket on the horse's back—it was one of the high holidays of the year. They went home to talk for a year about what they had seen at the state fair in Springfield.

The hero of the holiday came, Stephen A. Douglas, formerly of Springfield, once land commissioner, then supreme-court judge, later a congressman, and then United States senator from Illinois, at forty-one years of age a national leader of the Democratic party and the nearest of any man in Congress to filling the shoes of Clay, Calhoun, or Webster as an orator and parliamentary whip. He had been an active official in the Masonic order; he had carried the bulk of the Irish Catholic vote of the State; a large block of votes in both church and saloon elements were with him.

Blue-eyed, magnetic, chin drawn in, with a lionlike head, pivoting, elusive, with a face that drew men as Napoleon at Austerlitz or Nelson at Trafalgar, he was the most daring and forthright personal political force that had held the American stage since Andrew Jackson stepped off. His hero was Jackson; he was known as the foremost "whole-hog Jackson man." He was spokesman for what he called Young America as against what he called Old Fogyism.

Though he stood a short five feet, two inches, his head was shapely, balanced, large, and with its big shock of a black pompadour swept back in curly waves, and his deep bass voice dramatically calling for an ocean-to-ocean American republic, he was a figure that captured the imaginations of people and led them as Napoleon led; they were willing to go anywhere he said, without asking why; he embodied drama, politics, and a picturesque conduct of life; men wondered about him, tried to solve his personality and had no sooner done so to their satisfaction than he was on the stage in a new rôle with a new play.

He had come close to taking the Democratic nomination for President; Caleb Cushing and the wheelhorses who pulled the nomination for Franklin Pierce were not yet sure that blind luck had not been the chief factor. To be decisive, to be positive, to

win men his way by grand acting, was the sport of Douglas's life; political life was to his nostrils what the military was to Napoleon; he had an instinct for the grand manner, the sweeping and absolute jerk of the head or the defiant brandish of clenched fists or the contemplative and majestic pause of the man who knows how and can tell.

When he was leaving for Europe, with his sister managing his Washington house, she told him, "I don't know how to entertain senators and such big men." He asked, "You never have been afraid of me, have you?" "Of course not; I'm older than you and I've managed you." "Well, then, they say I'm the biggest toad in the puddle, and you needn't be afraid of them."

While telling the United States Senate what was right and wrong with the country, he could at times double his fists and shake them at imaginary enemies in the name of the Constitution and Andrew Jackson. He spoke the dedicatory oration for the Jackson equestrian statue in Washington, himself of a piece with the horse rearing on its hind legs with forefeet in the air. "He lashed himself into such a heat," wrote an observer, "that if his body had been made of combustible matter, it would have burnt out."

When the city council of Chicago in 1850 voted with only two dissenting members that the Fugitive Slave Law was cruel, unjust, unconstitutional, and that the city police should not be required to help arrest fugitive slaves, Douglas went to a mass meeting in Chicago where he was hissed to begin with, but in the end his arguments won a vote for the repudiation of the action of the city council. When his bill in Congress for Federal land grants to the proposed Illinois Central Railroad was beaten by southern votes, he won those votes solidly by routing the proposed railroad through southern territory with similar land grants. On his head in that year of 1854 had fallen such a storm of epithets and ridicule as probably no other public man in American history had known.

As the representative friend of Chicago business interests allied with New York and Boston interests, he had set out to open the

vast stretch of territory west of Iowa to the Pacific Ocean and make it ready for transportation and trade tributary to Chicago. Toward the south in St. Louis other business interests planned a "National Central Highway" from that city to San Francisco; the plans of Jefferson Davis, the Secretary of War, favored a railway to the Pacific with Memphis as its eastern terminus. The slavery question, land grants, Indian tribal reservations, railroad routes, territorial government for Nebraska, were snarled in what seemed to be a hopeless tangle.

Douglas cut through the tangle and won support for a bill which would make two territories, Nebraska on the north, Kansas on the south, in each of which the ballots of its voters would decide whether it should be free or slave territory. "They could vote slavery up or down" under the principle of "popular sovereignty," also called "squatter sovereignty." Southern votes in Congress came to this measure, with its provision that the Missouri Compromise was expressly repealed.

He had accepted from Senator Dixon of Kentucky a rider to his territorial bill; it was the only way to get required southern support. Dixon quoted Douglas as saying, "By God, sir, you are right, and I will incorporate it in my bill, though I know it will raise a hell of a storm."

On his way from Washington to Illinois, Douglas had looked from car windows to see the burning of dummies rigged out to look like himself, labeled with his name; in Ohio women had presented him with thirty pieces of silver; newspapers declared his middle name of Arnold derived from Benedict Arnold. In Chicago on a Saturday night a crowd had yelled "meow" and "boo" at him for two hours while he tried to explain his Missouri Compromise Bill; he was howled down.

The mob sang, "We won't go home till morning, we won't go home till morning." Douglas faced it, and, "The spirit of a dictator flashed out from his eye, curled upon his lip, and mingled its cold irony in every tone of his voice and every gesture of his body," according to the Chicago *Daily Democratic Press*. At midnight he looked at his watch, shook a fist at the crowd, and

shouted, "It is now Sunday morning—I'll go to church, and you may go to hell!"

The opening up of the territory west of the Missouri River for settlement and transportation and trade tributary to Chicago had come at a higher price than he expected.

So he was the central figure of attraction at the state fair. Thousands who hated his face and the very breath of him wanted a look at him. Other thousands who loved him and would go to war and bloody battles for his sake, who would answer his call as the boys of France answered the call of Napoleon, were ready to stand in the frosty night air of mid-October to hear him deliver a speech.

He registered at the Chenery House in Springfield on arriving; a brass band, men with torches, and a street black with people serenaded the senator; there were calls for "the Judge," "Judge Douglas," the "Little Giant"; he came out on the porch of the Chenery House, torches were held up so that the people could see his face; around him stood Lieutenant Governor McMurtry, John A. McClernand, Sam Buckmaster, John A. Logan, William R. Morrison.

And how should a United States senator, accused of wrong, speak to his home people when they came with a brass band and torches to serenade him? Douglas knew how. He should speak slowly, measuredly, distinctly. Each word should come forth from his lips as a piece of money from a deep casket. So he spoke. "Neither—to legislate—slavery—into—a territory—nor to exclude it—therefrom—but—to leave—the peo-ple—perfectly free—to form—and regulate—their—domestic institutions—in their own way—subject—only—to the—Constitution—of—the United States: that is—all—there is—of the Nebraska Bill. That is 'popular sovereignty'—upon which—I am to speak—tomorrow at the Statehouse." This was the voice in which he spoke for them, for Illinois, in Washington, the national capital.

Then he became a little familiar, as befitted a speech to the home people; the words came faster, as the torches flickered and

the black mass of people in the street listened amid huge shadows. "I have come home, as I have done so many times before, to give an account of my stewardship. I know the Democrats of Illinois. I know they always do their duty. I know, Democrats, that you will stand by me as you have always done. I am not afraid that you will be led off by those renegades from the party, Trumbull, Palmer, Judd, and Cook, who have formed an unholy alliance to turn the glorious old Democratic party over to the black Abolitionists. Democrats of Illinois, will you permit it?" And the street shook with voices en masse: "No! no! never! never!"

Between the torches his blue eyes flashed, his lips trembled. "I tell you the time has not yet come when a handful of traitors in our camp can turn the great State of Illinois, with all her glorious history and traditions, into a negro-worshiping, negro-equality community. Illinois has always been, and always will be, true to the Constitution and the Union." And he gracefully wished them good night; the torches, the brass band, the crowd, vanished; the street was empty.

On the afternoon of the next day Douglas spoke for nearly three hours in the Statehouse. Had not the Missouri Compromise been practically wiped out by the Omnibus Bill of 1850? Was not the real question whether the people should rule, whether the voters in a Territory should control their own affairs? If the people of Kansas and Nebraska were able to govern themselves, they were able to govern a few miserable negroes. The crowd enjoyed it; cries came, "That's so!" "Hit 'em again," and, the speech over, three ringing cheers were given for the "Little Giant."

Lincoln had a seat up front; he whispered occasionally in the ears of friends, and they chuckled and grinned. He walked down the main aisle at Douglas's elbow, joking the senator. It was only a few years back that Douglas had loaned Lincoln a hundred dollars and Lincoln had signed a note and later paid it. They had argued on the stump, in courtrooms, churches, grocery stores. To a pretty young woman Abolitionist who told

Douglas she didn't like the speech, Lincoln said: "Don't bother, young lady. We'll hang the judge's hide on the fence tomorrow."

When the young woman later insisted to Lincoln that he had no business laughing and joking during such a brutal speech, Lincoln answered that maybe he ought to feel a little guilty. As to the slaveholder's way of looking at slavery, it didn't hurt him so very much. "I have heard it all my life," he said, "and as the boy said about skinning eels, it don't hurt 'em so very much; it has always been done, they're used to it." Dick Oglesby hinted to the young woman that she had been unfair to Lincoln: "He knows how to manage us sapsuckers; just let him alone."

There had been a saying around courthouses, "With a good case Lincoln is the best lawyer in the state, but in a bad case Douglas is the best lawyer the state ever produced."

The next afternoon Lincoln stood before the same crowd that Douglas had spoken to. Judge Douglas had arrived at the Statehouse in an open carriage, standing with his hat in his hand bowing to a crowd that cheered him. In the carriage also were the governor of the state, Joel A. Matteson, and Douglas's colleague in the United States Senate, General James T. Shields, who had one time gone with Lincoln to a sand-bar in the Mississippi River to fight a duel. Douglas took a seat on the platform.

Lincoln came in, pushing and squirming his way to the platform where he was to reply to Douglas's speech of the day before. After being introduced, he questioned whether he was just the man who should be selected to reply to the senator, mentioned the world-wide fame of Senator Douglas, the high position in the United States Senate and the power Douglas held as a debater. He was going to discuss the Missouri Compromise, presenting his own connected view of it, and in that sense his remarks would not be specifically an answer to Judge Douglas, though the main points of Judge Douglas's address would receive respectful attention. "I do not propose to question the patriotism or to assail the motives of any man or class of men, but rather to confine myself strictly to the naked merits of the question." With

these apologies and explanations out of the way he was set for his main speech.

He began with a short history of the United States and slavery. He dug back into beginnings and traced out the growth of slavery: "Wherever slavery is it has been first introduced without law. The oldest laws we find concerning it are not laws introducing it, but regulating it as an already existing thing."

He gave five burning reasons for hating it as a "monstrous injustice." And he added: "Let me say I think I have no prejudice against the southern people. They are just what we would be in their situation. If slavery did not now exist among them, they would not introduce it. If it did now exist among us, we should not instantly give it up. This I believe of the masses North and South. Doubtless there are individuals on both sides who would not hold slaves under any circumstances, and others who would gladly introduce slavery anew if it were out of existence.

"We know that some southern men do free their slaves, go North and become tiptop Abolitionists, while some northern ones go South and become most cruel slave-masters. When southern people tell us they are no more responsible for the origin of slavery than we are, I acknowledge the fact. When it is said that the institution exists, and that it is very difficult to get rid of in any satisfactory way, I can understand and appreciate the saying. I surely will not blame them for not doing what I should not know how to do myself."

Was this oratory? debating? The man, Abraham Lincoln, was speaking to thousands of people as if he and another man were driving in a buggy across the prairie, exchanging their thoughts. He was saying that if all earthly power were given him he wouldn't know what to do as to slavery.

There were not ships and money to send the slaves anywhere else; and when shipped anywhere else outside of America they might all die. "What then? Free them all, and keep them among us as underlings? Is it quite certain that this betters their condition? I think I would not hold one in slavery at any rate,

yet the point is not clear enough for me to denounce people upon.

"What next? Free them, and make them politically and socially our equals? My own feelings will not admit of this, and if mine would, we well know that those of the great mass of the whites will not. Whether this feeling accords with justice and sound judgment is not the sole question, if indeed it is any part of it. A universal feeling, whether well or ill founded, cannot be safely disregarded. We cannot then make them equals. It does seem to me that systems of gradual emancipation might be adopted, but for their tardiness in this I will not undertake to judge our brethren of the South."

And yet, while he could not say what should be done about slavery where it was already established and operating, he was sure it would be wrong to let it spread North. "Inasmuch as you do not object to my taking my hog to Nebraska, therefore I must not object to your taking your slave. Now, I admit that this is perfectly logical, if there is no difference between hogs and negroes."

The South had joined the North in making the law that classified African slave traders as pirates and provided hanging as the punishment. "If you did not feel that it was wrong, why did you join in providing that men should be hung for it? The practice was no more than bringing wild negroes from Africa to such as would buy them. But you never thought of hanging men for catching and selling wild horses, wild buffaloes, or wild bears."

The speaker at times was in a way lost from his audience, as though language had not been invented for what he was trying to say. He referred to the man whose business was to operate "a sort of negro livery stable," buying and selling slaves. "He watches your necessities, and crawls up to buy your slave, at a speculating price. If you cannot help it, you sell to him; but if you can help it, you drive him from your door. You despise him utterly. You do not recognize him as a friend, or even as an honest man. Your children must not play with his; they may rollick freely with the little negroes, but not with the slave

dealer's children. If you are obliged to deal with him, you try to get through the job without so much as touching him, instinctively shrinking from the snaky contact. If he grows rich and retires from business, you still remember him, and still keep up the ban of nonintercourse upon him and his family. Now why is this? You do not so treat the man who deals in corn, cotton, or tobacco."

Over the country were 433,643 free black men, at $500.00 a head worth over $200,000,000.00. "How comes this vast amount of property to be running about without owners? We do not see free horses or free cattle running at large. How is this? All these free blacks are the descendants of slaves or have been slaves themselves; and they would be slaves now but for something which has operated on their white owners. What is that something? Is there any mistaking it? In all these cases it is your sense of justice and human sympathy continually telling you that the poor negro has some natural right to himself—that those who deny it and make mere merchandise of him deserve kickings, contempt, and death. And now why will you ask us to deny the humanity of the slave, and estimate him as only the equal of the hog? Why ask us to do what you will not do yourselves? Why ask us to do for nothing what two hundred millions of dollars could not induce you to do?"

He drew a line between his position and that of the Abolitionists. "Let it not be said I am contending for the establishment of political and social equality between the whites and blacks. I have already said the contrary."

He reasoned that the application of what Douglas called "the sacred right of self-government" depended on whether a negro was a man. "If he is not a man, in that case he who is a man may as a matter of self-government do just what he pleases with him. But if the negro is a man, is it not to that extent a total destruction of self-government to say that he too shall not govern himself? When the white man governs himself, that is self-government; but when he governs himself and also governs another man, that is more than self-government—that is despotism.

If the negro is a man, why, then my ancient faith teaches me that 'all men are created equal,' and that there can be no moral right in connection with one man's making a slave of another. What I do say is that no man is good enough to govern another man without that other's consent. I say this is the leading principle, the sheet anchor of American republicanism."

He referred to bowie knives and six-shooters ruling the border between Missouri and Kansas, with "never a glimpse of the ballot box," analyzed the Nebraska Bill to show that while the people were supposed to decide the slavery question for themselves, no time or place or manner of voting was named in the bill. "Could there be a more apt invention to bring about collision and violence on the slavery question than this Nebraska project is? I do not charge or believe that such was intended by Congress; but if they had literally formed a ring and placed champions within it to fight out the controversy, the fight could be no more likely to come off than it is. And if this fight should begin, is it likely to take a very peaceful, Union-saving turn? Will not the first drop of blood so shed be the real knell of the Union?"

And what should be done first of all? "The Missouri Compromise ought to be restored. For the sake of the Union, it ought to be restored. We ought to elect a House of Representatives which will vote its restoration." If it should not be restored, what would the country see? "The South flushed with triumph and tempted to excess; the North, betrayed as they believe, brooding on wrong and burning for revenge. One side will provoke, the other resent. The one will taunt, the other defy. Already a few in the North defy all constitutional restraints, resist the execution of the Fugitive Slave Law, and even menace the institution of slavery in the states where it exists. Already a few in the South claim the constitutional right to take and to hold slaves in the free states—demand the revival of the slave trade —and demand a treaty with Great Britain by which fugitive slaves may be reclaimed from Canada."

The speech was three hours long. Through most of it Lincoln

spoke as though he were not debating, trying to beat and crush an opponent, but rather as though he were examining his own mind, his own facts and views, his own propositions and the demonstrations of them.

And again he was no philosopher at all; he was a sad, lost man chanting a rhythm of the sad and lost. "Little by little, but steadily as man's march to the grave, we have been giving up the old for the new faith. Near eighty years ago we began by declaring that all men are created equal; but now from that beginning we have run down to the other declaration that for some men to enslave others is a 'sacred right of self-government.' These principles cannot stand together. They are as opposite as God and Mammon; whoever holds to the one must despise the other."

He pointed to "the liberal party throughout the world," watching slavery "fatally violating the noblest political system the world ever saw." And he intimated his knowledge of the movement on foot to extend slavery from the black race to certain lower grades of white labor, in saying: "Is there no danger to liberty itself in discarding the earliest practice and first precept of our ancient faith? In our greed-chase to make profit of the negro, let us beware lest we 'cancel and tear to pieces' even the white man's charter of freedom."

He stood among neighbors, in his shirt-sleeves, on a warm October day. The words came slow, hesitating, to begin with, and he spoke often in the tang of his childhood speech. "Just" sounded a little like "jist," and "such" suspiciously like "sich." As his body loosened and swayed to the cadence of his address, and the thoughts unfolded, drops of sweat stood out on his forehead; he was speaking not only with his tongue but with every blood-drop of his body.

A scholarly man said: "His manner was impassioned and he seemed transfigured; his listeners felt that he believed every word he said, and that, like Martin Luther, he would go to the stake rather than abate one jot or tittle of it." A farmer said: "I don't keer fur them great orators. I want to hear jist

a plain common feller like the rest on us, thet I kin foller an' know where he's drivin'. Abe Linkern fills the bill."

And the *Springfield Journal* account, written by Bill Herndon: "Lincoln quivered with feeling and emotion. The whole house was as still as death. And the house approved the glorious triumph of truth by loud and continued huzzas. Women waved their white handkerchiefs in token of woman's silent but heartfelt assent. Douglas felt the sting. He frequently interrupted Mr. Lincoln. The Nebraska Bill was shivered, and like a tree of the forest, was torn and rent asunder by the hot bolts of truth. It was a proud day for Mr. Lincoln. His friends will never forget it."

The speech came to an end. The crowd that heard it scattered out of the Statehouse to their homes. But in Peoria twelve days later, Lincoln gave the same speech again to a crowd of thousands and then went home to Springfield and wrote it out for publication.

Now among many politicians and people in Illinois it was seen there was one man in the state who could grapple and hold his own with Stephen A. Douglas. Among Whig and anti-Nebraska politicians it was recognized that a mind was among them that could strip a political issue to what he called its "naked merits." And among thousands of plain people was an instinct, perhaps a hope, that this voice was their voice.

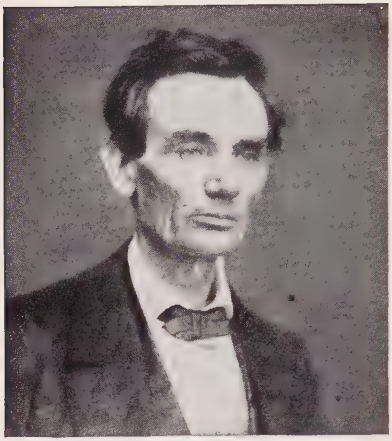
Douglas came to Lincoln after the Peoria speech and told him that he (Lincoln) had been more troublesome than all the opposition he had met in the United States Senate; he made the offer that he would go home and speak no more during the campaign if Lincoln would do the same. Lincoln took the offer. And one friend said, "This was certainly running Douglas into his hole and making him holler 'Enough.' "

Chapter 97

While Lincoln was away from Springfield, he was put on the Whig ticket as a candidate for the legislature, without being

Stephen A. Douglas and his wife, Adele Cutts Douglas

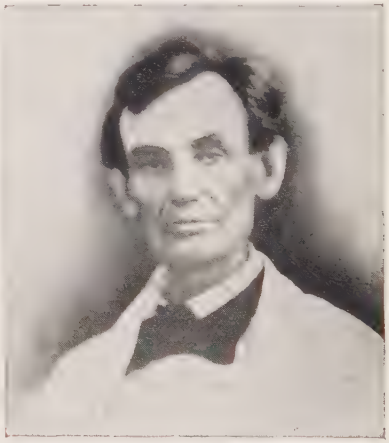
Photographs from Frederick H. Meserve Collection



Lincoln and his kin, Joseph Hanks and his wife, who farmed near Quincy, Illinois, where their young relative several times visited them and saluted "Uncle Joe."

Photograph from Frederick H. Meserve Collection

Photograph from author's collection



Joshua Speed, the only man to whom Lincoln wrote long letters on the perplexities of love and marriage.

Photograph from U. S. Army Signal Corps

Photograph of Lincoln from an ambrotype by Abraham B. Byers, Beardstown, Illinois, May 7, 1858.

Photograph from author's collection

asked about it. Mrs. Lincoln went to Simeon Francis, editor of the *State Journal,* and had his name taken off. On Lincoln getting back to Springfield, William Jayne, who had put his name on the ticket, went to see him.

"I went to get his consent to run," said Jayne later. "This was at his house. He was the saddest man I ever saw, the gloomiest. He walked up and down the floor, almost crying; and to all my persuasions to let his name stand in the paper, he said: 'No, I can't. You don't know all. I say you don't begin to know one-half, and that's enough.' "

Yet Jayne went away and again put Lincoln's name on the ticket, where it stayed; and he was elected to the legislature—and resigned—having other plans.

Six weeks after the Peoria speech Lincoln was sending out letters in the tone of one written to Joseph Gillespie, who had become a leading lawyer for the Alton Railroad. "I have really got it into my head to try to be United States senator, and, if I could have your support, my chances would be reasonably good. But I know, and acknowledge, that you have as just claims to the place as I have; and therefore I cannot ask you to yield to me, if you are thinking of becoming a candidate yourself. If, however, you are not, then I should like to be remembered affectionately by you . . . We shall have difficulty to unite our forces. Please write me, and let this be confidential."

Three months later he sat in the Statehouse watching an election for United States senator. He got 47 votes. Three more would have elected him. The balloting went on; his vote slumped to 15.

Of those who left him, he wrote to a friend: "One notable instance was Mr. Strunk of Kankakee. At the beginning of the session he came a volunteer to tell me he was for me and would walk a hundred miles to elect me; but lo! it was not long before he leaked it out that he was going for me the first few ballots and then for Governor Matteson."

The minute came when Lincoln saw that if he held his 15 loyal votes, Matteson, a Douglas and Nebraska Democrat, would

be elected. Lincoln let his votes go to Lyman Trumbull, Anti-Nebraska bolter from the Democratic party. Trumbull was elected.

Lincoln wrote to a friend: "I regret my defeat moderately, but I am not nervous about it. I could have headed off every combination, had it not been for Matteson's double game—and his defeat now gives me more pleasure than my own gives me pain. On the whole, it is perhaps as well for our general cause that Trumbull is elected. The Nebraska men confess that they hate it worse than anything that could have happened. It is a great consolation to see them worse whipped than I am."

Jim Matheny and a few other friends of Lincoln were sore about his being beaten for the senatorship. Democrats began quoting Matheny as having said in a speech: "In the most perfidious manner, they refused to elect Mr. Lincoln; and the mean, low-lived, sneaking Trumbull succeeded, by pledging all that was required by any party, in thrusting Lincoln aside and foisting himself, an excrescence from the rotten bowels of the Democracy, into the United States Senate; and thus it has ever been, that an honest man makes a bad bargain when he conspires or contracts with rogues."

From Lincoln, however, came no whisper nor murmur against Trumbull. At a reception to the new senator in the Edwards house in Springfield, he and Mrs. Lincoln came to be counted present. Asked if he was disappointed, he smiled, stepped over to Trumbull, and, shaking hands, said, "Not too disappointed to congratulate my friend Trumbull."

Mrs. Lincoln greeted Mrs. Trumbull, who had been Miss Julia Jayne. They were the two women who had helped write the "Rebecca" letters that had led Lincoln into the duel with Shields.

A newspaper man noted Lincoln's face as "overspread with sadness," yet the sorrow dropped as the face "lighted up with a winning smile, keen intelligence, genuine kindness of heart, and the promise of true friendship."

Chapter 98

JOSHUA SPEED, the one-time chum of Lincoln, wrote from his Kentucky home in May asking Lincoln, "Where do you stand now in politics?" And Lincoln, busy with law and politics, didn't answer for three months.

Then he wrote: "I think I am a Whig; but others say there are no Whigs, and that I am an Abolitionist. I now do no more than oppose the extension of slavery. I am not a Know-Nothing; that is certain. How could I be? How can any one who abhors the oppression of negroes be in favor of degrading classes of white people? Our progress in degeneracy appears to me to be pretty rapid. As a nation we began by declaring, 'All men are created equal.' We now practically read it, 'All men are created equal, except negroes.' When the Know-Nothings get control, it will read, 'All men are created equal except negroes, foreigners and Catholics.' When it comes to this I shall prefer emigrating to some country where they make no pretense of loving liberty —to Russia, for instance, where despotism can be taken pure, and without the alloy of hypocrisy."

Violence instead of law or intelligence was operating over the country; the word "violence" came oftener than any other in his letter to Speed. The Nebraska Bill was violence all through. "The Nebraska Law I look upon not as a law, but as a violence from the beginning. I say it was conceived in violence, is maintained in violence, and is being executed in violence. I say it was conceived in violence, because the destruction of the Missouri Compromise, under the circumstances, was nothing less than violence. It was passed in violence, because it could not have passed at all but for the votes of many members in violence of the known will of their constituents. It is maintained in violence, because the elections since clearly demand its repeal; and the demand is openly disregarded."

Of Andrew Reeder, an antislavery free-state governor of Kansas, who had been driven from office by armed men, he

commented, "Poor Reeder is the only public man who has been silly enough to believe that anything like fairness was ever intended."

In writing to Speed, Lincoln knew he was searching the mind and heart of an honest man and a southern slaveholder with a tested, clean heart. "You say that sooner than yield your legal right to the slave, especially at the bidding of those who are not themselves interested, you would see the Union dissolved. I am not aware that any one is bidding you yield that right; very certainly I am not. I leave that matter entirely to yourself. I also acknowledge your rights and my obligations under the Constitution in regard to your slaves. I confess I hate to see the poor creatures hunted down and caught and carried back to their stripes and unrequited toil; but I bite my lip and keep quiet."

He reminded Speed of the time on an Ohio River steamboat when they saw a dozen slaves shackled together with irons. "That sight was a continual torment to me, and I see something like it every time I touch the Ohio or any other slave border. It is not fair for you to assume that I have no interest in a thing which has, and continually exercises, the power to make me miserable. You ought rather to appreciate how much the great body of the northern people do crucify their feelings, in order to maintain their loyalty to the Constitution and the Union."

He presented his facts and deduced, "The slave breeders and slave traders are a small, odious, and detested class among you; and yet in politics they dictate the course of all of you, and are as completely your masters as you are the master of your negroes."

It was a letter with tears and soft cries in it. He was writing to the one man with whom he had exchanged his secrets about women. The Speeds had sent him violets from their honeymoon.

He ended the letter: "My kindest regards to Mrs. Speed. On the leading subject of this letter, I have more of her sympathy than I have of yours; and yet let me say I am, Your friend forever." And as he mailed that letter to Speed he knew he

had let his feelings go more freely than he dared to when speaking in public in Illinois.

His plain ways of living and talking carried over into his politics. Often at the Sangamon County courthouse, the lawyers had seen him arrive and greet them: "Ain't ye glad to see me? Ain't ye glad I come?"

Though commanding higher pay as a lawyer, he was driving his own cow from pasture and milking her, cutting wood and carrying it into the house, shoveling the snow off his sidewalks. It was natural he should explain to Joe Gillespie that social snobbery was involved in the slavery question.

He had asked a Kentuckian why it was becoming more respectable than it used to be to own slaves. The Kentuckian answered: "You might have any amount of land, money in your pocket, or bank stock, and while traveling around, nobody would be any wiser; but if you had a darky trudging at your heels, everybody would see him and know you owned a slave. It is the most glittering property in the world. If a young man goes courting, the only inquiry is how many negroes he or she owns. Slave ownership betokens not only the possession of wealth, but indicates the gentleman of leisure, who is above labor and scorns labor." Lincoln also noted there were 600,000 white people in Kentucky who did not own slaves, as against 33,000 who did; and political conventions were controlled by the slave owners.

He was asked to subscribe money for the defense of free-state Kansas; he subscribed with a proviso, "Twenty-five dollars to be paid whenever Judge Logan would decide it was necessary to enable the people of Kansas to defend themselves against any force coming against them from without the Territory, and not by authority of the United States." Logan made no decision.

To the same Abolitionists who wanted to shoot their way to a free-state Kansas, he had said: "I believe in the providence of the most men, the largest purse, and the longest cannon. You would rebel against the Government, and redden your hands in blood. If you are in the minority, as you are, you can't succeed. When they have the most men, the longest purse, and the biggest

cannon, you can't succeed. If you have the majority, as some of you say you have, you can succeed with the ballot, throwing away the bullet. Let there be peace.

"In a democracy, where the majority rule by the ballot through the forms of law, these physical rebellions and bloody resistances are radically wrong, unconstitutional, and are treason. Our own Declaration of Independence says that governments long established, for trivial causes should not be resisted. Revolutionize through the ballot box."

Bill Herndon was one of this Abolitionist group, and he said that this talk from Lincoln steered their efforts into other channels, and, "It saved many of us from follies, if not our necks from the halter."

Polly, a free negro woman working in Springfield, came to the Lincoln & Herndon law office one day. Her boy had been hired as a steamboat hand down the Mississippi, and, arriving in New Orleans without his freedom papers, had been put in jail. Lincoln and Herndon went to the governor of Illinois, who said he could do nothing, and wrote to the governor of Louisiana, who said he could take no action. The two lawyers headed a subscription-list and raised the cash that bought the negro boy's freedom. And Herndon said Lincoln had told the governor of Illinois, "By God, governor, I'll make the ground in this country too hot for the foot of a slave, whether you release this boy or not."

Once, between law cases in a courthouse, he had argued with a Chicago lawyer that the slavery question would split the nation. And the two lawyers had beds in the same room at the hotel, and that night sat up in their nightshirts arguing. "At last we went to sleep," said the Chicago lawyer afterward; "and early in the morning I woke up and there was Lincoln half sitting up in bed. 'Dickey,' he said, 'I tell you this nation cannot exist half slave and half free.'" To which the Chicago lawyer answered, "Oh, Lincoln, go to sleep."

Chapter 99

In the year 1856, on the Missouri and Kansas border, two hundred men, women, and children were shot, stabbed, or burned to death in the fighting between free- and slave-state settlers and guerrillas. A Baptist minister in Clay County, Missouri, was trying to bring up his boys, Frank and Jesse James, to be righteous citizens and Christians. The cost of the fighting, counting crops burned and cattle and horses stolen or killed, amounted to two million dollars.

In the month of May, as the first state convention to organize the Republican party of the state of Illinois was meeting in Bloomington, the town of Lawrence, Kansas, had been entered by riding and shooting men who burned the "Free State" hotel and wrecked two printing offices. The *Herald of Freedom* had published an editorial, calling: "Come one, come all, slaveocrats and nullifiers; we have rifles enough, and bullets enough, to send you all to your (and Judas's) own place. If you're coming, why don't you come along?" The governor of Kansas had been arrested in Missouri, his house had been set on fire, and himself chained on a prairie, a jail being lacking.

A Massachusetts senator had said of a South Carolina senator that every time he opened his mouth "a blunder flew out," and a nephew of the South Carolina senator had walked into the United States Senate chamber and broken a cane over the head of the Massachusetts senator and beaten his victim near to death.

While these issues were in the air, the dissatisfied political elements of Illinois, as of other states, were holding conventions to organize state parties and get up a national organization. Of the delegates who came to Bloomington about one-fourth were regularly elected and the others had appointed themselves. All stripes of political belief outside of the Democratic party were represented: Whigs, bolting anti-Nebraska Democrats, Free-Soilers, Know-Nothings, Abolitionists. Some who came were afraid that wild-eyed radicals would control.

As Lincoln and Henry C. Whitney walked to the Alton depot to see who would come as delegates from Chicago, Lincoln stopped in at a jewelry store and bought his first pair of spectacles; he was forty-seven years old and kind of needed spectacles, he told Whitney.

Seeing Norman B. Judd, a conservative politically, and an attorney for the Rock Island Railroad, arrive, Lincoln remarked to Whitney: "That's the best sign yet; Judd is here and he's a trimmer."

The convention met in Major's Hall, upstairs over Humphrey's Cheap Store, near the Courthouse Square, adopted a platform denouncing the Democratic administration, declared Congress had power to stop the extension of slavery and should use that power, and nominated for governor Colonel William H. Bissell, who while a member of Congress had clashed with Jefferson Davis, the Secretary of War, over the conduct of Illinois troops during the Mexican War, and when challenged by Davis to a duel had chosen as weapons "muskets loaded with ball and buckshot."

Then came speeches to dedicate the new party and forecast its life and work. After several delegates had loosed their oratory, there were calls for Lincoln. He stood up. There were cries, "Take the platform," which he did.

He looked the convention in the eye and reminded it, "We can hardly be called delegates strictly, inasmuch as, properly speaking, we represent nobody but ourselves."

He observed, "We are in a trying time," which they all knew very well; then suddenly came the thrust, "Unless popular opinion makes itself felt very strongly, and a change is made in our present course, blood will flow on account of Nebraska and brother's hand will be raised against brother." And the delegates sat up and put their elbows on the backs of benches in front of them. It was a sober man speaking. "We must not promise what we ought not, lest we be called on to perform what we cannot. We must not be led by excitement and passion to do that which our sober judgments would not approve in our cooler moments."

He noted that the delegates had been collected from many different elements. Yet they were agreed, "Slavery must be kept out of Kansas." The Nebraska Act was usurpation; it would result in making slavery national. "We are in a fair way to see this land of boasted freedom converted into a land of slavery in fact."

A terribly alive man stood before them. By this time Joseph Medill, of the *Chicago Tribune,* and the other newspaper writers had felt their pencils slip away; they were going to listen; somebody else would get the report of the speech. Herndon and Whitney had started to take notes, and forgotten they had pencils. Listeners moved up closer to the speaker. "I read once in a law book, 'A slave is a human being who is legally not a *person* but a *thing.*' And if the safeguards to liberty are broken down, as is now attempted, when they have made *things* of all the free negroes, how long, think you, before they will begin to make *things* of poor white men?"

He summarized the history of the United States to show that freedom and equality, sacred to the men of the American Revolution, had become words it was fashionable to sneer at. "Suppose Kansas comes in as a slave state, and all the 'border ruffians' have barbecues about it, and free-state men come trailing back to the dishonored North, like whipped dogs with their tails between their legs, is it not evident that this is no more the 'land of the free'? And if we let it go so, we won't dare to say 'home of the brave' out loud." Monstrous crimes were being committed in the name of slavery by persons collectively which they would not dare commit as individuals. The slave power came dangerously near taking Illinois in 1824; it did get Missouri in 1821. By violence, craft, intimidation, it was making steady advances. "But as sure as God reigns and school children read, that black foul lie can never be consecrated into God's hallowed truth."

He rehearsed the panorama of current events. "The repeal of the sacred Missouri Compromise has installed the weapons of violence: the bludgeon, the incendiary torch, the death-dealing

rifle, the bristling cannon—the weapons of kingcraft, of the Inquisition, of ignorance, of barbarism, of oppression. We see its fruit in the dying bed of the heroic Sumner; in the ruins of the 'Free State' Hotel; in the smoking embers of the Herald of Freedom; in the free-state governor of Kansas chained to a stake on freedom's soil like a horse thief, for the crime of freedom.

"We see it in Christian statesmen, and Christian newspapers, and Christian pulpits applauding the cowardly act of a low bully, who crawled upon his victim behind his back and dealt the deadly blow. We note our political demoralization in the catchwords that are coming into such common use; on the one hand, 'freedom shriekers,' and sometimes 'freedom screechers'; and on the other hand 'border ruffians,' and that fully deserved. And the significance of catchwords cannot pass unheeded, for they constitute a sign of the times."

Should force be met with force? He could not say. "The time may yet come, and if we are true to ourselves may never come. Do not mistake that the ballot is stronger than the bullet."

Applause came regularly. He was saying what the convention wanted said. He was telling why the Republican party was organized. As the applause roared and lingered, the orator walked slowly toward the back of the platform, took a fresh start and worked toward the front. To Bill Herndon and others he seemed taller than ever before in his life. "He's been baptized," said Herndon.

The speech came to its climax with the declaration that no matter what was to happen, "We will say to the southern disunionists, We won't go out of the Union and you shan't," and the caution and threat: "There is both a power and a magic in popular opinion. To that let us now appeal; and while, in all probability, no resort to force will be needed, our moderation and forbearance will stand us in good stead when, if ever, we must make an appeal to battle and to the God of Hosts." The delegates applauded, stamped, cheered, waved handkerchiefs,

threw hats in the air, and ran riot. He was their tongue and voice.

And after it was all over Whitney did the best he could at making notes of the speech, and as he walked with Lincoln to Judge Davis's house afterward, he told Lincoln that Jesse K. DuBois had burst out to him, "Whitney, that is the greatest speech ever made in Illinois, and it puts Lincoln on the track for the Presidency." And Lincoln walked for a half a minute with stooped shoulders, not saying a word. Then, said Whitney, "He straightened up and immediately made a remark about some commonplace subject having no relation to the subject we had been considering."

They stopped a minute at the Courthouse Square to listen to Andrew H. Reeder, the ex-governor of Kansas, delivering a three-hour speech on outrages and infamies of Kansas. "He would have to do a great deal to overcome my prejudice against him," said Lincoln. It was the man he had referred to in writing to Speed, "Poor Reeder is the only public man who has been silly enough to believe that anything like fairness was ever intended."

The next morning, at the Illinois Central depot waiting for the Springfield train, delegates wrung Lincoln's hand, and William Hopkins of Grundy burst out, "Lincoln, I never swear, but that was the damnedest best speech I ever heard." And Herndon told people: "The smothered flame broke out; Lincoln stood before the throne of the Eternal Right, in the presence of his God, and unburdened his penitential and fired soul. If Mr. Lincoln was six feet, four inches high usually, at Bloomington he was seven feet."

Speaking for the Democrats who were joining the Republican party, the Chicago *Democratic Press,* edited by "Long John" Wentworth, commented: "Abraham Lincoln made the speech of the occasion. For an hour and a half he held the assemblage spellbound by the power of his argument, the intense irony of his invective, the brilliancy of his eloquence." And the editor went on, "I shall not mar any of its fine proportions by attempting

even a synopsis of it." He suggested, "Mr. Lincoln must write it out and let it go before all the people." This was advice Lincoln also heard from others. And he refused to follow the advice. The speech was too full of passion, could be twisted too many ways to please the opposition. He would let it be a memory.

Five days later posters were up in Springfield announcing a Republican mass meeting to be held in the courthouse to ratify. The courthouse was lighted, windows shone at seven o'clock. Bells rang. Into the courtroom came three men who waited for a crowd that failed to come.

Lincoln took the Speaker's stand and said: "Gentlemen, this meeting is larger than I knew it would be. I knew that Herndon and myself would come, but I did not know that any one else would be here; and yet another has come—you, John Pain. These are sad times and seem out of joint. All seems dead, dead, dead; but the age is not yet dead; it liveth as surely as our Maker liveth. Under all this seeming want of life and motion, the world does move, nevertheless. Be hopeful. Let us adjourn, and appeal to the people."

They stepped out of the courthouse into a June night of stars, with measured and peaceful constellations arching over the steel blue vault of the sky.

The streets leading to the near-by prairies smelled of loam with the push of new grass in it. And from puddles and ditches along the prairie roads the shrilling of the frogs lifted a song of young summer.

The tiniest sort of corn leaves were coming up in rows in a field near the corner of Eighth and Jackson streets. "The age is not dead; it liveth as surely as our Maker liveth. Be hopeful."

Chapter 100

When Lincoln and his wife started housekeeping at the corner house on Eighth and Jackson streets, they could look from their kitchen windows away from the town and out onto cornfields.

Since then the prairie had been filling up with houses between them and the tracks of the Great Western Railroad, later known as the Wabash. As Lincoln went to drive up his cow for milking, he could rest his gaze on cottages standing where he once had seen patches of cabbages and onions. He was living in town instead of on the edge of town. Hundreds of other towns in the northwestern states were edging farther out into the cornfields. A pavement of wooden planks had been laid around the public square in Springfield. The new gas company was laying pipes and had hired Lincoln to certify title to the gas-works city lot.

The Alton Railroad and the Rock Island had spanned the spaces between Chicago and the Mississippi River so that barbecue orators, discussing progress, sang it as a proud fact that now the iron horse that sipped his morning draught from the crystal waters of Lake Michigan slaked his evening thirst on the banks of the majestic "Father of Waters." On passenger trains it happened occasionally in zero weather that the hose from the water tank to the engine boiler froze, and an hour or two, or an afternoon, would be lost while the fireman and engineer thawed out the hose; also the railroads had not learned to be particular about fences along the right of way, and cows often got caught under the locomotive wheels and spoiled the time tables for a day.

These delays in transportation were familiar to Lincoln, along with many other phases of the transportation revolution. Lawyer friends of his, such as O. H. Browning of Quincy, were addressing gatherings of farmers in schoolhouses and courtrooms, collecting subscriptions to stock payments for the building of railroads to come. Farmers and storekeepers, as well as speculators and big landowners, saw romance, civilization, and big winnings in iron trails that would be carriers of a commerce for constantly increasing populations. Railroads, new settlers, new farm machinery, were sending farm lands higher in price every year. Corn shellers, revolving horse-rakes, a cob and corn crusher, threshing machines, revolving churns, windmills,

wheat drills, refrigerators, were advertised in the *Bloomington Pantagraph* in the fall of 1856.

Leading lawyers took cases for and against railroads. Norman B. Judd, the Republican leader in Chicago, was an attorney for the Rock Island Railroad; Joe Gillespie was with the Alton; Browning took cases for the Burlington; Stephen A. Douglas was the particular friend of the Illinois Central. And Abraham Lincoln's reputation as a lawyer went up several notches because of a famous decision he had won for the Illinois Central.

When the Illinois Central got its charter, the legislature provided that it should be free from payment of all taxes, and instead should pay seven per cent of its gross earnings into the state treasury. By this act all counties were stopped from assessing and taxing the railroad. But it happened in 1853 that McLean County decided to assess and tax the Illinois Central Railroad property as it did any other property. Lincoln wrote a letter to T. R. Webber, a McLean County official, saying if they wanted to be sure to have him on their side there was no time to lose. "The company are offering to engage me for them. You have the first right to my services, if you choose to secure me a fee something near such as I can get from the other side." It was understood that if McLean County could win the case, then all other counties through which the railroad line ran would also have the power to assess and tax the corporation's property.

Lincoln described the issue as involving "the largest law question that can now be got up in the state," adding, "and therefore in justice to myself, I cannot afford, if I can help it, to miss a fee altogether." This letter was dated September 12, 1853. Having given his McLean County friends first chance at retaining his services, he wrote three weeks later to Mason Brayman, counsel for the Illinois Central Railroad: "Neither the county of McLean nor any one on its behalf has yet made any engagement with me in relation to its suit with the Illinois Central Railroad on the subject of taxation. I am now free to make an

engagement for the road, and if you think of it you may 'count me in.' Please write me on receipt of this."

As the case came to trial in the McLean circuit court, Lincoln represented the railroad corporation and had against him his old law partners, John T. Stuart and Stephen T. Logan. His case was beaten in the circuit court; the decision was that the railroad must pay a tax in every county through which it passed. The cost in taxes would mount into millions and bankrupt the corporation. Lincoln appealed to the supreme court, argued the case twice, and in December, 1855, won a decision reversing the lower court.

He presented his bill to the Illinois Central Railroad corporation at their Chicago office. The bill was for $2,000.00. The official handling the bill looked at it and said, "Why, this is as much as a first-class lawyer would have charged!" adding that it was "as much as Daniel Webster himself would have charged." And Lincoln was paid a fee of $200.00.

When he got back on the circuit and told the other lawyers, they didn't know whether to laugh or cry at this treatment of a lawyer by a corporation that had been saved millions of dollars through Lincoln's victory in court. Lincoln started a suit against the Illinois Central for a fee of $5,000.00. The case was called; the lawyer for the railroad didn't show up; Lincoln was awarded his $5,000.00 one morning; in the afternoon the railroad lawyer arrived and begged Lincoln for a retrial. Lincoln said he was willing, the case was called, and Lincoln read a statement signed by six of the highest-priced lawyers in Illinois that the sum of $5,000.00 for the services rendered in the case "is not unreasonable." Before the jury went out he told them he had been paid $200.00 by the railroad and they should make the verdict for $4,800.00. Which they did.

Thirty-eight days went by and the railroad company failed to pay the $4,800.00 fee. An execution was issued directing the sheriff to seize property of the railroad. Then the fee was paid. And high officers of the railroad stated, "The payment of so large

a fee to a western lawyer would embarrass the general counsel with the board of directors in New York."

Lincoln deposited the $4,800.00 in the Springfield Marine Bank, and later, in handing Herndon half of the fee, he pushed it toward his partner, then held it back an instant, and said with a smile, "Billy, it seems to me it will be bad taste on your part to keep saying severe things I have heard from you about railroads and other corporations. Instead of criticizing them, you and I ought to thank God for letting this one fall into our hands." And Herndon wrote, "We both thanked the Lord for letting the Illinois Central fall into our hands."

No bad feeling developed, however, between Lincoln and the Illinois Central Railroad. Five months after he had forced them by court action to pay him the fee he asked for, he met John M. Douglas, the Illinois Central lawyer, and gave him a letter to carry to Jesse K. Dubois, a neighbor of Lincoln in Springfield, a Republican, holding the office of state auditor. The letter:

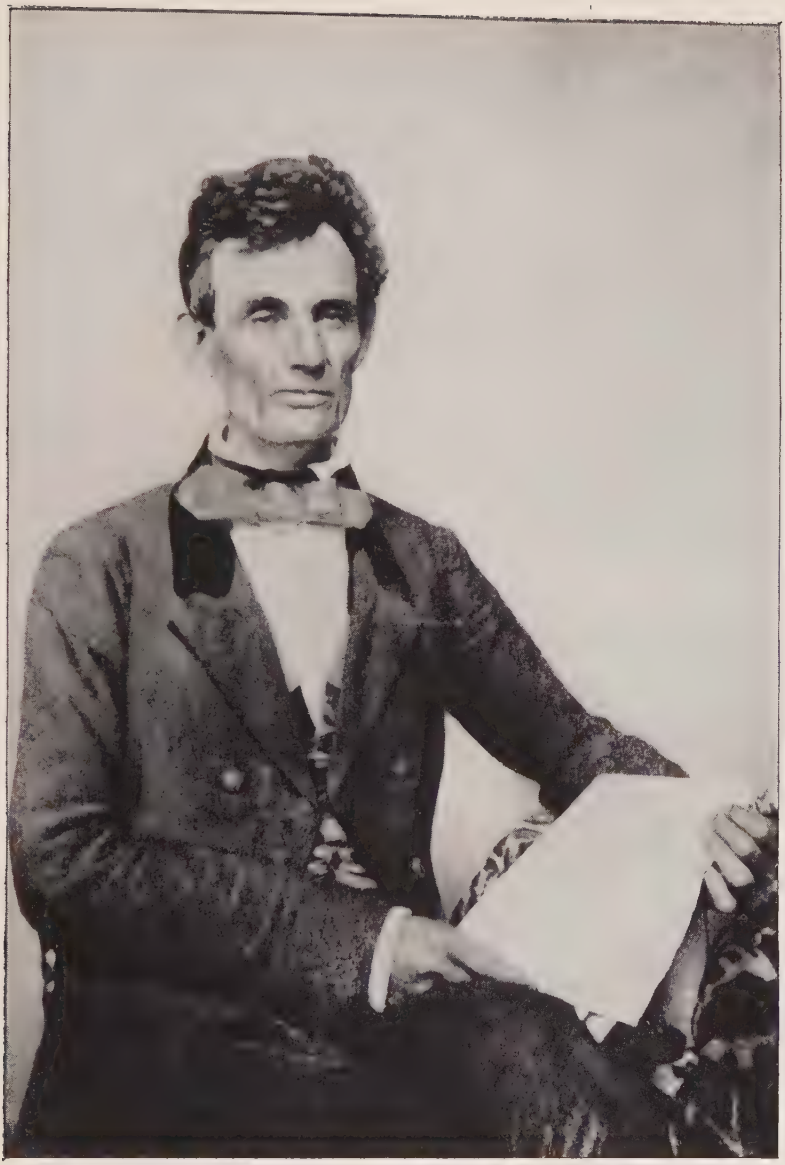
BLOOMINGTON, Dec. 21, 1857.

DEAR DUBOIS:

J. M. Douglas of the I. C. R. R. Co. is here and will carry this letter. He says they have a large sum (near $90,000) which they will pay into the treasury now, if they have an assurance that they shall not be sued before Jany. 1860—otherwise not. I really wish you would consent to this. Douglas says they *cannot* pay more and I believe him. I do not write this as a lawyer seeking an advantage for a client; but only as a friend, only urging you to do what I think I would do if I were in your situation. I mean this as private and confidential only, but I feel a good deal of anxiety about it.

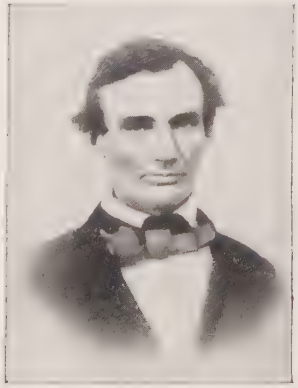
Yours, as ever,
A. LINCOLN.

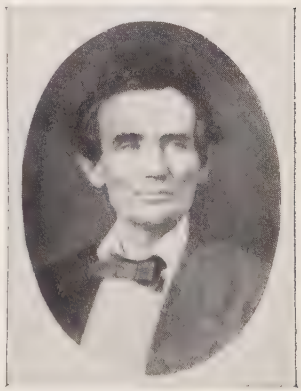
He was called on to decide disputes between railroad companies. J. F. Joy, the Illinois Central Railroad official, telegraphed to him from Chicago once: "Can you come here immediately and act as arbitrator in the crossing case between the Illinois Central and Northern Indiana R. R. Companies if you should be appointed? Answer and say yes if possible."



Lincoln is trying a law case and watching politics in Chicago in 1854 and sits for this portrait at 12 North Wells Street.

From original photograph presented to the Chicago Historical Society by George Schneider





From ambrotype of Lincoln by Calvin Jackson, Pittsfield, Illinois, 1858 (left). Cast of Lincoln's right hand by Leonard Volk, Springfield, 1860 (center). Photograph of Lincoln by Joseph Hill, Springfield, 1860 (right). Major's Hall, Bloomington, where Lincoln delivered the "Lost Speech" (upper left). Pike House, Bloomington, where Lincoln spoke from a veranda and witnessed campaign street fights (upper right).

Lincoln photographs from Fredcrick H. Meserve Collection
Other photographs from author's collection

In one case Lincoln argued that the railroad corporation he was defending in a damage suit had more of a soul than a lying witness who brought the damage suit. The opposing lawyer had said his client had a soul and the railroad hadn't. Lincoln replied:

"But our client is but a conventional name for thousands of widows and orphans whose husbands' and parents' hard earnings are represented by this defendant, and who possess souls which they would not swear away as the plaintiff has done for ten million times as much as is at stake here."

Lincoln tried to remind the jury of the farmers who in that time had mortgaged their farms, and the farmers' wives who often had subscribed their butter-and-egg money to get a railroad connecting them with better markets.

When his annual pass on the Alton Railroad was used up, he wrote the superintendent, Richard P. Morgan: "Says John to Tom, 'Here's your old rotten wheelbarrow. I've broke it usin' on it. I wish you would mend it, 'case I shall want to borrow it this arternoon.' Acting on this as a precedent, I say, 'Here's your old "chalked hat." I wish you would take it and send me a new one, 'case I shall want to use it by the 1st of March.' "

He had become a responsible lawyer, trusted with important affairs of property. The McLean County Bank retained him to bring suit against the City of Bloomington. In Springfield, the Gas Works asked him to make certain their title to the two city lots on which they were located, which Lincoln did, later sending the Gas Works a bill for $500.00.

He had influence among judges and lawyers; not only was he a power in politics so that he counted in putting judges on the bench and taking them off; he was also an attorney who had personal qualities and social attractions that gave him influence. He was asked by a caller in his office one day to use his influence in a certain legal quarter; he was offered $500.00 if he would use his influence.

Herndon heard the offer made, and said later: "I heard him refuse the $500.00 over and over again. I went out and left them together. I suppose Lincoln got tired of refusing, for he finally took the money; but he never offered any of it to me; and it was noticeable that whenever he took money in this way, he never seemed to consider it his own or mine. In this case, he gave the money to the Germans in the town, who wanted to buy themselves a press. A few days after, he said to me in the coolest way, 'Herndon, I gave the Germans $250.00 of yours the other day.' 'I am glad you did, Mr. Lincoln,' I answered. Of course I could not say I was glad he took it."

When he traveled from Springfield to Chicago he sometimes took a long way around, he didn't have a pass on the direct route. Henry C. Whitney took a midnight train at Champaign once, and found Lincoln on board. "He explained to me that he was going to Chicago," said Whitney, "and he had passes on the Illinois Central and the Great Western, both; he could get to Chicago by the circuitous route free, while he had no pass by the direct route."

In the famous Rock Island Bridge case Lincoln figured as the apostle of the march of civilization. Against threats of lawsuits and injunctions, the Rock Island Railroad had built a bridge 1,582 feet long, across the Mississippi River, from Rock Island on the Illinois side across to Davenport on the Iowa side. The engineers paid out toil and sweat to make sure that the first railroad spans across the world's greatest river should be strong and safe for passenger and freight trains to rumble over with their cargoes from Council Bluffs or Chicago.

But—the bridge had enemies. There were men who hated the bridge. They swore vengeance against the bridge. They had a contempt for railroads, and especially any railroad that ran over a river where their boats ran. The cargoes of the world should be carried by steamboats, they believed; yet somehow the bridge arose and crossed the river without being shattered by the steamboatmen riding on their proud, white side-wheelers, with their pork and grain and roustabouts on the lower decks,

their saloons, dining-rooms and passengers, banjoists, gamblers, and gay women on the upper decks. The bridge got built.

The bridge was built, even though the Chamber of Commerce of St. Louis voted, at the time the cornerstone of the bridge pier was laid, that a bridge across the Mississippi River was "unconstitutional, an obstruction to navigation, dangerous, and that it was the duty of every western state, river city, and town to take immediate action to prevent the erection of such a structure." Threats to force removal of the bridge were heard in congressional committee rooms in Washington. The effort persisted at Washington "to abolish the Rock Island bridge nuisance."

Then, on May 6, 1856, came the steamboat *Effie Afton*. She rammed into a pier of the Rock Island Railroad bridge, took fire, and burned to a total loss, while part of the bridge burned and tumbled into the river. And steamboatmen up and down the Mississippi had a jubilee, shouted the news; there was ringing of bells and blowing of whistles on all boats in view of the burning, sagging truss of the bridge.

Then the owners of the *Effie Afton* sued the bridge company for damages. And Norman B. Judd, general counsel of the Rock Island Railroad, and one of the Bloomington convention organizers of the Republican party, called on Abraham Lincoln to represent the company in the hearing before the District Court of the United States for the Northern District of Illinois, holding sessions in what was known as the "Saloon Building" at the southeast corner of Clark and Lake streets in Chicago, with Judge McLean presiding.

Engineers, pilots, boat owners, river men, bridge builders, were called as witnesses. Lincoln had made himself so familiar with the figures, measurements, distances, facts in the case, that sometimes there was laughter as he rambled around the room looking abstracted, but occasionally turning suddenly to correct a witness on a matter of feet or inches or the span of a truss. Once he sat down by a big box stove, surrounded with cuspidors, and whittled, seemingly lost to the world. An instant came when he straightened up, walked toward a witness and demanded that

the original notes as to certain measurements be produced. The witness was shown to be mistaken; it had its effect on the jury. Lincoln went back to whittling by the big box stove, seemingly lost to the world.

In his argument Lincoln plainly felt the call of all the old romance of the Mississippi River and its boat life. He began with pointing out that St. Louis might wish that the Rock Island bridge should not stand, that with the bridge gone a larger volume of Iowa products would have to be shipped by way of St. Louis. Meetings held in St. Louis so indicated. He pointed to the great channel of the Mississippi flowing "from where it never freezes to where it never thaws"; it would not be pleasing to block up such a channel.

Yet there was a growing travel from east to west that had to be considered; it was as important as the Mississippi traffic. It was growing larger and larger, this east-to-west traffic, building up new country with a rapidity never before seen in the history of the world. In his own memory he had seen Illinois grow from almost empty spaces to a population of a million and a half; there were Iowa and other rising communities in the Northwest. "This current of travel has its rights as well as that of north and south." Across the burned bridge the railroad had hauled 12,586 freight cars and 74,179 passengers in eleven months. During four months of the year the river could not be navigated. But the bridge and the railroad could be used. "This bridge must be treated with respect in this court and is not to be kicked about with contempt."

The opposing counsel, Judge Wead, had alluded even to a dissolution of the Union of states. "The proper mode for all parties in this affair is 'to live and let live,' and then we will find a cessation of this trouble about the bridge."

The suggestion had been made that a suspension bridge, having no piers, for steamboats to ram, might solve the difficulty. How so? "A suspension bridge cannot be built so high but that the chimneys of the boats will grow up till they cannot pass. The steamboat men will take pains to make them grow."

He analyzed the angles of the piers, the curve of the river, the depth of the channel, the velocity of the current, and showed the final smash of the boat was "in the splash door aft the wheel." And he proved to general satisfaction that the pilot ran his boat as though the river had no bridge with piers standing in it, and the starboard wheel were not working. But the main drive of his argument was that one man had as good a right to cross a river as another had to sail up or down it.

He asked if the products of the boundless, fertile country lying west of the Mississippi must for all time be forced to stop on its western bank, be unloaded from the cars and loaded on a boat, and after passage across the river be reloaded into cars on the other side. Civilization in the region to the west was at issue.

With a whimsical sarcasm, he touched on the testimony that the boat had "smelled a bar," remarking, "For several days we were entertained with depositions about boats 'smelling a bar.' Why, then, did the *Afton,* after she had come up smelling so close to the long pier, sheer off so strangely? When she had got to the centre of the very nose she was smelling, she seemed suddenly to have lost her sense of smell and to have flanked over to the short pier."

The jury listened two days. The speaker came to a pause. He knew that in handling a jury there is a certain moment when it is an advantage to quit talking. He said: "Gentlemen, I have not exhausted my stock of information, and there are more things I could suggest regarding this case, but as I have doubtless used up my time I presume I had better close."

The jury were locked up; when they came out they had agreed to disagree; their action was generally taken as a victory for railroads, bridges, and Chicago, as against steamboats, rivers, and St. Louis.

As he practiced law and earned from two to three thousand dollars a year, he saw other lawyers adding farm after farm to their possessions. Land was the favorite and general form for the material riches of rich men. Among the men with whom

he mixed and joked and worked in his daily life were those who owned more land than they could walk across in a week. Stephen T. Logan, the little frowzy-headed lawyer with whom he had once been in partnership, was adding farm to farm. Judge David Davis had ten thousand acres in Iowa, besides his Illinois farms; he was worth a million dollars, people said. The judge had entered tracts of land in Champaign County and sold sections of them. When notes on these lands were not paid and were overdue, he gave them to Henry C. Whitney, who brought suits for payment.

And Whitney told what happened, in this manner: "At a convenient season, when it came time to adjourn court, he did not adjourn, but remained on the bench till everybody filed out, except the clerk and the sheriff, he busying himself reading some court papers. Then I arose and called up the case of 'Davis vs. Smith.' 'Well,' said the Judge nonchalantly, 'what is wanted?' 'Default on a note.' 'Has the defendant been served in time and no appearance?' asked he. 'Yes, your Honor, all is regular.' 'Mr. Sheriff, call John Smith.' 'Jaw Smy—Jaw Smy—Jaw Smy,' said the sheriff perfunctorily. No answer. 'Judgment by default: clerk assess damages,' said the Judge, and went on with his reading a decent length of time, and then formally adjourned court."

"There was no prearrangement at all about this. I instinctively knew what the judge wanted and how he wanted it done; and he instinctively knew how to play his part, and how I would play mine; and no one in all Champaign County knew that the judge had really rendered judgment in his own case, but himself, the clerk, sheriff, and myself. Could he not have accomplished it thus—he must necessarily have brought another judge there to enter these formal judgments or sent them to another circuit by change of venue. As there was no inherent wrong in this, the judge didn't care for its appearance—provided it could be done in the sly way it was."

One day a check for $500.00 came into Lincoln's hands, the largest retaining fee that he had ever handled for himself as a

lawyer. He was hired for a law case that interested him from start to finish. It sent his imagination back to the day when he went to the fields and harvested grain with scythe and cradle, when he had formed calluses on the insides of his hands from holding the scythe handle. Since that time the reaper had come; the farmer sat and drove a team of horses while revolving scythes behind cut swaths of grain; one farmer was as good as a gang. Two factories in Illinois were making these reaping machines. It was part of the agricultural revolution, the urge to make the prairies pay out with bigger crops.

In Chicago was Cyrus H. McCormick, with his big shops for making a reaping machine; in Rockford was John M. Manny with his shops, also for making a reaping machine. And McCormick was bringing court action against Manny, claiming that Manny's patents were not lawful and valid, and that they infringed on the McCormick rights. If McCormick could win his case he would stop the Manny factory at Rockford and get $400,000.00 as damages. His lawyers were E. N. Dickerson and Reverdy Johnson, while Manny had George Harding, Edwin M. Stanton, and Abraham Lincoln.

Testimony had been taken in Cincinnati and sent on to Lincoln at Springfield for him to read. He was expected to go on to Cincinnati later and make a famous argument before Judge McLean, the same Federal judge before whom the Rock Island bridge case had been tried, with victory for Lincoln's client. His colleague, Stanton, had also figured in a bridge case, the finest steamer on the Ohio River having smashed into the Wheeling suspension bridge in order to show that the bridge stood in the way of free navigation.

A serious man was this Stanton; at his father's knee he had sworn an oath to fight slavery till death; he had toiled through Kenyon College in Ohio and practiced law before he was of legal age; he had swallowed poison while defending a client in a murder trial so as to describe its effects and save his client from hanging, which he did; at his bedside he kept the ashes of his firstborn child in an urn. He was a man strict in language, dress,

duty. When his eyes lighted on Lincoln at the Burnett House in Cincinnati, wearing heavy boots, loose clothes, farmer-looking, he used language which sounded like a question, "Where did that long-armed baboon come from?" And he described Lincoln as wearing a linen duster with splotches like "a map of the continent," and was quoted as saying he wouldn't associate with "such a damned, gawky, long-armed ape as that."

Up and down the courtroom walked Lincoln as the testimony was being taken, stopping to listen now and then, resuming his walk, thinking it all over as though he were in his own law office at home. In his coat pocket he had a manuscript of his argument; it was packed with the cunning and attraction he felt about man and machinery, farming and civilization.

The moment came when Stanton told the court that only two arguments would be made for the defense whether he, Stanton, spoke or not. He suggested to Lincoln that he should speak. Lincoln answered, "No, you speak." Stanton replied, "I will," and picking up his hat said he would go and prepare his speech.

Thus Lincoln was frozen out, and his carefully planned speech was not delivered. He sent the manuscript to Harding, with the request that Harding should not show it to Stanton. And Harding, it was said in Cincinnati, threw it into a waste basket without reading it.

A young representative of the Manny company, Ralph Emerson, had come on from Rockford, Illinois, and struck up an acquaintance with Lincoln. They took long walks of evenings. Emerson told Lincoln that the study of law interested him; he had read a little and believed he might choose it for a life work. He wanted to ask a question. "Mr. Lincoln, is it possible for a man to practice law and always do by others as he would be done by?"

Lincoln's chin dropped lower into his bosom as they walked the grade of a long Cincinnati hill in the quiet of evening haze and the peace of hours after sundown. When Lincoln spoke at last he had no answer to the young man's question. And the

young man decided that the lack of an answer was in itself one; he decided not to be a lawyer, and said afterward, "That walk turned the course of my life."

Lincoln visited the courts in Cincinnati and enjoyed watching Bellamy Storer, a judge in Room No. 1 of the Superior Court. Storer had careless manners and direct methods; it was said he could "mingle in the same hour the gravity of the judge and the jest of the clown." Lincoln took it all in, and remarked: "I wish we had that judge in Illinois. I think he would share with me the fatherhood of the legal jokes of the Illinois bar."

On leaving Cincinnati he told young Emerson that he was going back to Illinois to study law; eastern lawyers seemed to be coming West for practice. "They have got as far as Cincinnati now; they will soon be in Illinois. I will be ready for them."

Back in Springfield he divided the $2,000.00 fee, half and half, with Herndon, said he had been "roughly handled by that man Stanton," and discussed Judge McLean, classifying the judge as "an old granny." Getting specific, he said of the judge, "If you were to point your finger at him and a darning needle at the same time, he never would know which was the sharper."

Often Lincoln used his inborn sense of the comic to strip the opposition of dignity. In one case his client was a rich man who had beaten an editor with a stick; the editor sued for $10,000.00 damages. The opposition lawyer roused the jury and people who crowded the courtroom to high excitement; many faces were wet with tears. It was Lincoln's turn to speak. And Abram Bergen, who was young and was thinking of studying law, was wondering what Lincoln would do. His impression was: "Lincoln dragged his feet off the table, on the top of which they had been resting, set them on the floor, gradually lifted up and straightened out his length of legs and body, and took off his coat. While removing his coat it was noticed by all present that his eyes were intently fixed on something on the table before him. He picked up the object, a paper, scrutinized it closely,

and, without uttering a word, indulged in a long, loud laugh, accompanied by his wonderfully grotesque facial expression. It was magnetic; the whole audience grinned.

"Then he laid the paper down slowly, took off his cravat, again picked up the paper, re-examined it, and repeated the laugh. It was contagious. He then deliberately removed his vest, showing his one yarn suspender, took up the paper, again looked at it curiously, and again indulged in his peculiar laugh. Its effect was absolutely irresistible; the judge, jury, and whole audience joined in the merriment, and this before Lincoln had spoken a single word.

"When the laughter had subsided, he apologized to the court for his seemingly rude behavior and explained that the amount of damages claimed was at first written $1,000.00. He supposed the plaintiff afterward had taken a second look and concluded that the wounds to his honor were worth an additional $9,000.00. He immediately and fully admitted that the plaintiff was entitled to some amount, told a funny story, and specially urged the jury to agree on some amount. The verdict was for a few hundred dollars and was entirely satisfactory to Lincoln's client."

A witness said his name was J. Parker Green. Lincoln cross-examined: Why J. Parker Green?—What did the J. stand for?—John?—Well, why didn't the witness call himself John P. Green?—That was his name, wasn't it?—Well, what was the reason he didn't wish to be known by his right name?—Did J. Parker Green have anything to conceal; and, if not, why did J. Parker Green part his name in that way? As he rang the changes on the name and shifted the tones of his voice in pronouncing the name, he took all dignity away from the witness; it was so ridiculous that boys in the street that day were calling at each other, "J. Parker Green." A Bloomington lawyer, Adlai Stevenson, said: "There was something in Lincoln's way of intoning his questions which made me suspicious of the witness, and I was never able to rid my mind of the absurd impression that there was something not quite right about J. Parker Green. He was discredited and the defendant went free."

In three big cases, involving railroad taxes, a railroad bridge over a great river, and a farmer's reaping-machine patent, he had dug deep in the philosophy of changing civilizations, and the technical engineering as well as the economic structure of the society in which he was living.

He had carried a textbook on astronomy, and he had shared hours with the essayist Francis Bacon, who on the topic, "Of Vicissitude of Things," wrote: "There is an abstruse astrologer that saith, If it were not for two things that are constant (the one is, that the fixed stars ever stand at a like distance one from another, and never come nearer together, nor go further asunder; the other, that the diurnal motion perpetually keepeth time), no individual would last one moment. Certain it is, that the matter is in a perpetual flux, and never at a stay."

The county seat of Logan County had been given his name. Three settlers there had received early information that a railroad was to cross their county and had bought a big tract of land where they guessed the county seat might be located. Lincoln drew up the papers for incorporating the town.

And when he asked them what the name of the new town was to be he was told to call it Lincoln. He warned them, "You better not do that, for I never knew anything named Lincoln that amounted to much." Then he wrote in the name of Lincoln, and it was so spelled out on the maps and the railroad time tables.

Chapter 101

THE Quincy lawyer, O. H. Browning, kept a diary. Often he made the note that, when stopping in Springfield, he had "spent the evening at the Lincolns." He told the Lincolns how, in driving on rain-soaked prairie roads, the buggy got stuck in the mud, and he waded knee-deep in mud and took fence rails to lift the wheels out and help the horses start—or how, "before we reached Mill Creek bridge, and about two miles west of Burton, we lost a tire from one of the wheels of the carriage, and before

we discovered it had broken the felloes and spokes of the wheel to pieces. We walked on to Burton—took dinner—hired a common two-horse lumber wagon of a Mr. Childers, and drove on."

Browning heard Ralph Waldo Emerson lecture in the Statehouse in Springfield, on "The Anglo-Saxon," and noted, "He limned a good picture of an Englishman, and gave us some hard raps for our apishness of English fashions and manners." And concerning Emerson the next night, on "Power," he noted: "He is chaste and fascinating, and whilst I cannot approve of all his philosophy, I still listen and delight in his discourses. They contain much that is good, and are worth hearing. After the lecture I attended a supper in the senate chamber given by the ladies of the First Presbyterian Church, and spent a pleasant evening."

When Browning was defending two young men charged with cattle stealing, the judge made remarks indicating that he, the judge, believed the young men very likely were cattle thieves. Browning wrote, "I am not one who thinks the world is retrograding, and human nature is sinking deeper in depravity, but there certainly has been a lamentable deterioriation in the judiciary of Illinois within the last few years both mentally and morally, and I cannot witness such things as occurred today without well-grounded alarm."

Three July days he once noted in his diary as having cool weather. On Monday he wrote: "Attending court. Commenced trial of Williamson, formerly postmaster at Lacon, who is indicted for robbing the mail. I am assisting Lincoln at his request. Rain in afternoon." On Tuesday: "Argued case against Williamson. The evidence was very strong, almost conclusive. I was so discouraged that I wished to decline a speech, but at the persuasion of Lincoln I addressed the jury for something over two hours. The case was given to them at 4 P.M. and they are yet out at 9. The defendant is a young man, who lost a leg in the Mexican War, and does not look to be very bright, a total stranger to me, and I believe him to be guilty, but wish him acquitted. My sympathies are awakened. I am sorry for the

poor devil." And on Wednesday: "Jury found Williamson guilty. Will yet try to arrest the judgment but have not much hope. Weather much cooler."

Browning knew, and so did other lawyers in Illinois, that hidden under his brick-dust coloring Lincoln had queer soft spots and his feelings ran out into understanding of blunderers and stumblers; he spoke their languages and stories.

Lincoln defended an old farmer who had taken a bunch of sheep "on shares," fattened them with his year's crop through the winter, and in the spring, when they all died, couldn't pay the sheep owner for them. The sheep owner sued for the money. The first trial was a mistrial; the second trial was lost, and the costs and damages stripped the old man of nearly all his property. At seventy he was starting west to hunt cheap land and make a new home. As he shook hands with the old man and spoke good-by, Lincoln's eyes were wet and he had to hold back tears.

Lincoln had brought suit one year against Frink & Walker, whose stagecoach between Rushville and Frederick had tipped over on one side, cutting and bruising passengers. And two years later he had brought suit against the Great Western Railway Company in behalf of a brakeman, Jasper Harris, who had, as Lincoln's brief recited, "his right foot, ankle, leg and thigh, while in the services of said company, so greatly torn, crushed and broken that amputation of his said right limb above the knee was necessary."

A woman client of Lincoln's had him survey and lay off into lots a piece of land she owned near the Springfield city limits. He found that by some mistake the woman had become owner of three more acres of land than she was entitled to, and Charles Matheny, the former owner, was the loser of the three acres. Lincoln notified her she ought to pay the heirs of Matheny the money owed them at the price per acre first agreed on. The woman couldn't see it; Lincoln wrote her again; the Matheny heirs were poor and needed the money, he told her. And again he wrote explaining to the woman what seemed to him plain

justice. One day the woman sent him payment in full and he hunted up the heirs and shared them out their money.

One lawyer who often talked, walked, and slept in the same bed with Lincoln was Henry C. Whitney of Urbana. To Whitney it seemed that Lincoln, when he had taken a case, wanted to win, like most lawyers—only there were tricks and twists he wouldn't use.

"In a clear case of dishonesty, he would hedge in some way so as not himself to partake of the dishonesty; in a doubtful case of dishonesty, he would give his client the benefit of the doubt," was Whitney's impression. And he told of a murder case in which Lincoln "hedged" after getting into it. Leonard Swett and Whitney had spoken for the defence, and believed they would get a verdict of acquittal. Then Lincoln spoke to the jury, took up the facts and the evidence, and was all of a sudden making arguments and admissions that spoiled the case for the prisoner at the bar. The jury came in with a verdict that sent the client to the penitentiary for three years.

And the case got to working in Lincoln's mind. Somehow he hadn't done just right. Having helped get the man in the penitentiary, he worked to get him out, and in a year handed him a pardon from the governor of the state.

He could weep over the old man out of luck, losing a year's fodder crop and, what with dying sheep, losing a farm and moving farther west for a fresh start in life. He was of the frontier, had grown up with it, and seen its line shift west. He understood the frontier scorn and hate for a horse thief. In the case in Edgar County of George W. A. Albin versus Thomas Badine, in slander, he briefed the slanderous remarks: "1st. Albin stole Brady's horse out of my pasture last night. He is a horse thief and that is what he came here for. 2nd. Albin stole that horse last night out of my pasture; and he is a horse thief, and I know that was his business here. 3d. He is a horse thief and I always believed his business was horse stealing, and that is what brought him here. 4th. Albin stole Brady's horse out of my pasture last night, and it is not the first horse he has

stolen. He is a horse thief and follows that business. 5th. You stole that horse out of my pasture, and it is not the first one you have stole. 6th. You know you stole that horse, and it is not the first horse you have stole, and I believe you follow the business. 7th. You are a horse thief and you came here for that business—and I believe you came here for nothing else. You are a horse thief. 8th. He is a damn'd little thief, his business is horse stealing and I can prove it."

The home of Lincoln's friend and colleague, Whitney, was in Urbana, and Lincoln came one summer day in 1856 to Urbana to speak at a public meeting in a church. Calling Whitney to one side, he whispered: "There is a boy in your jail I want to see, but I don't want any one beside yourself to know it. I wish you would speak to the jailer."

The boy was a cripple, had stolen a watch from an old man named Green in Urbana, and was under a charge of stealing a gun in Charleston; also the boy was the son of Lincoln's step-brother, John D. Johnston, and so a grandson of Sally Bush Lincoln. "I'm going to help him out of these two cases," said Lincoln, "but that's the last; after that, if he wants to continue his thieving, I shall do nothing for him."

The jail was a rough log cabin, with a one-foot-square hole through which prisoners talked with callers. And Whitney told later what happened: "The prisoner heard us and set up a hypocritical wailing and thrust out toward us a very dirty Bible which Lincoln took and turned over the leaves mechanically. He then said, 'Where were you going, Tom?' The latter attempted to reply, but his wailing made it incoherent, so Lincoln cut it short by saying: 'Now, Tom, do what they tell you—behave yourself—don't talk to any one, and when court closes I will be here and see what I can do for you. Now stop crying and behave yourself.' And with a few more words we left. Lincoln was very sad; I never saw him more so."

"At the fall term of the court, Amzi McWilliams, the prosecuting attorney, agreed with us that if the Greens would come into court and state that they did not desire to press the case further

he would file a *nolle pros.* That same evening Lincoln and others were to speak in a church, and at my suggestion Lincoln and I left the meeting and made our way to the house where the Greens lived. They were a venerable old couple, and we found them seated in their humble kitchen greatly astonished at our visit. I introduced Lincoln, who explained his position and wishes in the matter in a homely, plain way, and the good old couple assented. The next day they came into court, willing that the boy should be released, which was promptly done."

Once it happened that Lincoln classified himself as a sort of detective. There came to Springfield an Englishman who had been in St. Louis, passing himself off as a nobleman and buying land and cattle without settling his debts. Claims against him had been put in the hands of the Springfield banker, Jacob Bunn, whose brother, John, sat up with Lincoln nearly all of one summer night in front of the hotel where the confidence man was staying. Noticing that he was closely watched, the Englishman took Lincoln to one side and said he could pay a thousand dollars if that would wipe out the claims against him. Lincoln took the offer to Bunn, who agreed to the settlement, the money was paid, and the Englishman went his way with no one at his heels.

Bunn asked Lincoln what the fee would be. Lincoln answered he had been more of a detective than a lawyer in the case; if some time in the future he felt he had a fee coming he would ask Bunn for it.

And Bunn had nearly forgotten all about the fee, when one morning, as he was eating breakfast, Lincoln came in and asked for a hundred-dollar fee in the case. Bunn said he would be glad to pay the fee but wished to know why Lincoln had let the matter go so long, and why the fee should be collected in the middle of a morning breakfast.

And as Bunn told it later, "Lincoln's answer was that he needed the money, not for himself, but for another who was in trouble and needed his help. Three of his friends had spent the night in a spree, had broken in almost the entire front of a grocery or saloon; they were in the sheriff's office and would

be placed in jail unless some one should settle for the damage done. In a few moments I secured the money and turned it over to him. He seemed more or less relieved, and hurriedly left to interview the sheriff and release his friends. I did not press him for names, but learned that two of his friends were the sons of wealthy parents and the third was his law partner. Lincoln was poorer than any of them, and yet he seemed to regard it his duty to crawl out of his bed before daybreak to their rescue. I doubt if another man in Springfield would have done it. No wonder Lincoln sometimes thanked God he was not born a woman!"

In the town of Danville, Lincoln's law partner there, Ward Hill Lamon, brought the case of a girl named Scott, who was, as they said, "not in her right mind." She had $10,000 in property, mostly cash, and a schemer had struck up an acquaintance with her and asked her to marry him. Her brother wanted a conservator appointed by the court to take care of her and her property, and had agreed with Lamon to pay a fee of $250.00 when the case was won. On trial it took Lincoln and Lamon only twenty minutes to win their case, and Lamon was paid $250.00. Lincoln was sore and hurt, forced Lamon to give back to Miss Scott one-half of the $250.00.

Judge Davis said, in the wheezing whisper of a man weighing 300 pounds, "Lincoln, you are impoverishing this bar by your picayune charges of fees, and the lawyers have reason to complain of you." Other lawyers murmured approval. Lincoln stuck to the point: "That money comes out of the pocket of a poor, demented girl, and I would rather starve than swindle her in this manner." In the evening at the hotel, the lawyers held a mock court and fined him; he paid the fine, rehearsed a new line of funny stories, and stuck to his original point that he wouldn't belong to a law firm that could be styled "Catch 'em and Cheat 'em."

The spitework of human tongues, the lashing and snarling of hate that hunts for stinging names to fasten on other people, this came before him in his work, for review and analysis. A

dark-complexioned Portuguese named Dungey married a woman named Spencer, whose brother called Dungey a "negro." As it was a crime under Illinois laws then for a white man to marry a negro, the words were slanderous, and Dungey had Lincoln bring a slander suit. Lincoln's brief recited that Spencer, referring to Dungey as "Black Bill," "in the presence of divers good citizens falsely and maliciously spoke and uttered of and concerning the plaintiff, these false, scandalous, malicious, and defamatory words: 'Black Bill (meaning the plaintiff) is a negro and it will be easily proved if called for.' "

In addressing the jury, he mentioned Spencer as having called Dungey a "nigger," and argued: "Gentlemen of the jury, my client is not a negro, though it is no crime to be a negro—no crime to be born with a black skin. But my client is not a negro. His skin may not be as white as ours, but I say he is not a negro, though he may be a Moor." Not only had Spencer called Dungey a "nigger" but he had followed it up with adding "a nigger married to a white woman."

"And," said Lincoln, "if the malice of the defendant had rested satisfied with speaking the words once or twice, or even thrice, my client would have borne it in silence; but when he went from house to house, *gabbling,* yes, *gabbling* about it, then it was that my client determined to bring this suit." The jury gave a verdict of $600.00 for the Portuguese, who on the advice of Lincoln cut the amount $400.00.

The verdict also required Spencer to pay Lincoln's fee and the court costs; Lincoln asked two other lawyers what he should charge; they told him he would have to fix the fee; he asked, "Well, gentlemen, don't you think I have honestly earned twenty-five dollars?" They could hardly believe their ears; for Lincoln had handled the case through two terms of court, had fought hard in court two days of trial, and the opposition had to pay the bill. They expected a sum more like a hundred dollars; the charge was twenty-five.

Lincoln and Leonard Swett took the defense of Father Chiniquiy, a French Catholic priest in Kankakee County, who was

accused by one of his parishioners, Peter Spink, of falsely accusing Spink of perjury. Father Chiniquiy said he could prove his case; he would contest to the last. So a change of venue was taken to Champaign County, where there came to the courthouse in Urbana hundreds of principals, lawyers, witnesses, onlookers, with camp outfits, musicians, parrots, dogs, and changes of clothing. The hotels of Urbana were filled and the overflow slept in tents. The trial dragged on for weeks, and finally the jury went out, and came back unable to agree on a verdict.

Again, at the next term of court, the case was to be called. Hundreds of people had again arrived with camp outfits, musicians, parrots, dogs, and changes of clothing, to hear the testimony and gossip. Lincoln had between-times been at work on a peaceable settlement, and as the gossips and onlookers were getting ready to hear again all the ins and outs of the scandal, he brought into court a paper that wiped the case off the books. It read: "Peter Spink *vs.* Charles Chiniquiy. This day came the parties and the defendant denies that he has ever charged, or believed the plaintiff to be guilty of perjury; that whatever he has said from which such a charge could be inferred, he said on the information of others, protesting his own disbelief in the charge; and that he now disclaims any belief in the truth of said charge against said plaintiff." And they split the court costs and paid their lawyers and everybody went home.

There came a day when Lincoln dropped all his big law cases, dropped all big political affairs then stirring, and threw himself with all he had into the defense of a young man charged with murder, a young man who had grown up since the days at Clary's Grove when he was a baby and Lincoln rocked him in a cradle. As the years passed by, Jack and Hannah Armstrong had moved from Clary's Grove over into Mason County, where they had located on a bluff of the Sangamon River near the mouth of Salt Creek. And Jack Armstrong had died and they had buried him back in Menard County, in Old Concord graveyard where Ann Rutledge had been buried, and where Abe Lincoln had sat alone through long hours. The death of Jack Arm-

strong had come sooner because a little before he died one of his twin sons, William, nicknamed "Duff" Armstrong, had got into a terrible scrape that many people were talking about; many were saying there had been too much reckless fighting and too many killings, and it might be a good time for a hanging.

At a place called Virgin Grove, not far from the Armstrong home, a camp meeting religious revival had been held; and because it was against the law to sell whisky inside of one mile of a camp meeting, a saloon keeper from Chandlerville had prepared a shack just a little over a mile from the camp-meeting grounds. The bar was made of rough lumber, and poles and brush formed the sides and roof.

And to this place came the wild boy, Duff Armstrong, buying whisky of the bartender, Thomas Steel. For two or three days he was a steady customer, and one evening he was stretched out on a dry-goods box sleeping off the whisky he had taken, when a man named Metzker came in, grabbed Duff Armstrong by the feet and dragged him off the box. Armstrong got up and swore at Metzker, who answered, "Don't be a damn fool; come on and have a drink."

They stood up to the bar and each poured out a glass of whisky. As Armstrong lifted his glass to his lips and started to drink, Metzker threw the whisky from his glass into Armstrong's face and eyes. Armstrong wiped the whisky off his face with his shirt-sleeves, and as soon as his eyes could see and he could make out Metzker, he drove a blow into Metzker's face, knocked him down, and was going to stamp his boots on Metzker when the bartender, Thomas Steel, stepped in and kept Armstrong off.

As feelings cooled down, Armstrong lay down again on the dry-goods box, and went to sleep. Then in came Jim Norris, a friend of Armstrong, took a few drinks, and a fight started between him and Metzker. The bartender stepped between them, gave Metzker a present of a pint of whisky to go home. And they loaded Metzker onto his horse, started him for home, but he fell off the horse and had to be helped on again.

At the house of Ed Ormie, three miles away, where Metzker

was staying, they noticed he acted queer the next morning, but he had looked a good deal the same, other times before, when sobering up. This time he was sick five days and then died. A coroner's jury and the doctors decided he had died from a blow over the eye caused by a blunt instrument. A house painter named Charles Allen from Petersburg swore that he saw the fight between Armstrong and Metzker, that it was between ten and eleven o'clock at night, and, by the light of a moon shining nearly straight over them, he saw Armstrong hit Metzker with a sling shot and throw the sling shot away and he, Allen, picked it up. Jim Norris and Duff Armstrong were arrested. And Jack Armstrong, with whom Abe Lincoln had wrestled on the level green next to Offut's store twenty-six years before, told Hannah, "Sell everything you have and clear Duff."

Then Jim Norris, who had killed a man, gone to trial and won acquittal a year or two previous, was put on trial, convicted, and sent to the penitentiary for eight years. And the two lawyers defending Duff took a change of venue to Beardstown, and it was there Lincoln told Hannah Armstrong he remembered all her old-time kindness to him and his services were free to her as long as he should live. The two defending lawyers were glad to have the help of Lincoln. And the trial began.

First was the picking of a jury; Lincoln aimed to have young men on the jury; young, hot blood would understand other young, hot blood better, perhaps; the average age of the jurymen, as finally picked, was twenty-three years. Then came the witnesses. With each one Lincoln tried to find some ground of old acquaintance. "Your name?" he asked one. "William Killian." "Bill Killian. . . . Tell me, are you a son of old Jake Killian?" "Yes, sir." "Well, you are a smart boy if you take after your dad."

Of the witnesses, the one that seemed to make out that Duff Armstrong was a murderer was Allen, the house painter, who said he saw Armstrong by the light of a moon nearly overhead, on a clear night, hit Metzker with a sling shot. Against him was a witness, Nelson Watkins of Menard County, who testified that he had been to camp meeting the day after the fight, that

he had with him a sling shot, and that he had thrown it away because it was too heavy and bothersome to carry. He had made the sling shot himself, he testified; he had put an eggshell into the ground, filled it with lead, poured melted zinc over the lead, but the two metals wouldn't stick; then he had cut a cover from a calfskin bootleg, sewed it together with a squirrel-skin string, using a crooked awl to make the holes; and he had then cut a strip from a groundhog skin that he had tanned, and fixed it so it would fasten to his wrist.

Lincoln took out his knife, cut the string with which the cover was sewed, showed it to be squirrel-skin, and then took out the inside metals and showed they were of two different sorts that did not stick together. He had shown that the sling shot which Allen testified he had picked up was identical with one that Watkins testified he had made and thrown away. Meantime, he had sent out for an almanac, and when the moment came he set the courtroom into a buzz of excitement, laughter, whispering, by showing that, instead of the moon being in the sky at "about where the sun is at ten o'clock in the morning," as the leading witness testified, a popular, well-known family almanac for 1857 showed that on the night of August 29, 1857, the moon had set and gone down out of sight at three minutes before midnight, or exactly 11:57 P.M. The almanac raised the question whether there was enough light by which a murder could be competently and materially witnessed.

In his speech to the jury, Lincoln told them he knew the Armstrongs; he knew whether the Armstrongs were good people or bad people; the wild boy, Duff Armstrong, he had held in his arms when Duff was a baby; he had rocked the baby in the cradle at the pioneer home at Clary's Grove; he was sure in his mind and heart about whether Duff Armstrong ought to be hanged or locked in a prison; he could tell good citizens from bad citizens and if there was anything he was certain of, it was that the Armstrong people were good people; they were plain people; they worked for a living; they made their mistakes; but they were kindly, lovely people and belonged with the salt of

the earth. He had told the mother of Duff, "Aunt Hannah, your son will be free before sundown." And it so happened. As the jury had filed out to vote a verdict, one of the jurymen winked an eye at Duff, so he afterwards told it.

Stories started later that Lincoln had played a trick, rubbed out numbers and put in other numbers in the almanac, or he had used an almanac for the wrong year, or he had pasted a bogus page into a good almanac, so as to prove his own case. But when men went and hunted up almanacs for the night of August 29, 1857, they found that all the almanacs had the moon setting at three minutes before midnight, so that a murder at eleven o'clock couldn't have had much light from the sky for a witness to see by.

Chapter 102

LINCOLN was careless and easy-going sometimes about collecting money owed to him by clients. Occasionally when money to be paid him was mentioned to him, he didn't seem to be listening. But when he was short of cash he would try to collect by mail, through writing a letter such as one to David A. Smith. He had touched on other matters between him and Smith, and then finished the letter: "One other little matter. I am short of funds and intended to ask Col. Dunlap for my fee in the case in the United States court, but he left sooner than I expected. He is in no default with me, for he once mentioned the subject to me, and I passed it by. But I now need the money and I will take it as a favor if you will show him this note and get him to send it to me. We never agreed on the amount; but I claim $50—which I suppose neither he or you will think unreasonable."

Among the lawyers and among the people along the circuit of courthouses that Lincoln traveled, he was known as odd in his ways; they joined in the feeling of Dennis Hanks, "There's suthin' peculiarsome about him." John W. Bunn, the Springfield banker, was asked by a Chicago firm to have a local attorney

help them in an attachment suit involving several thousand dollars; Lincoln won the suit and charged $25.00; the Chicago firm wrote Bunn, "We asked you to get the best lawyer in Springfield, and it certainly looks as if you had secured one of the cheapest."

He wrote Abraham Bale that a "difficulty" about a wheat sale ought to be settled out of court. "I sincerely hope you will settle it. I think you can if you *will*." The other party, wrote Lincoln, "I have always found a fair man in his dealings." He made his client the offer: "If you settle, I will charge nothing for what I have done, and thank you to boot. By settling, you will more likely get your money sooner, and with much less trouble and expense."

A lease on a valuable hotel property in Quincy was handled by Lincoln for George P. Floyd, who mailed a check for $25.00, to which Lincoln replied: "You must think I am a high-priced man. You are too liberal with your money. Fifteen dollars is enough for the job. I send you a receipt for fifteen dollars and return to you a ten-dollar bill." In coöperation with a Chicago lawyer he saved a farm in Brown County for Isaac Hawley, a Springfield man, and Hawley had $50.00 ready to pay a fee; Lincoln smiled into Hawley's face and drawled, "Well, Isaac, I think I will charge you about ten dollars." To another client he said, "I will charge you $25.00, and if you think that is too much I will make it less."

He wrote free advice to a farmer in Woodford County. "If fraud can be proved, the sale will be set aside. This is all that can be done. Any lawyer will know how to do it."

A woman gave him a check to push a real-estate claim in court; he found the claim no good and told the woman on her next visit to his office that there was no action; she thanked him, took her papers and was going, when Lincoln said, "Wait —here is the check you gave me." A district school-library committee, along with the state superintendent of public instruction, met him on the courthouse steps with a green bag in his hand;

he drew up a contract for them with a New York publisher's representative, and on their mentioning a fee he said he couldn't take pay for legal services on a question of public interest.

In notes for a law lecture, he wrote: "The matter of fees is important, far beyond the mere question of bread and butter involved. Properly attended to, fuller justice is done both to lawyer and client. An exorbitant fee should never be claimed. As a general rule never take your whole fee in advance. Then you will feel that you are working for something and you are sure to do your work faithfully and well."

In the case of clients far off, he would take the fee as early as possible, however, for he once wrote James S. Irwin: "Whatever fees we earn at a distance, if not paid before, we have noticed, we never hear of after the work is done. We, therefore, are growing a little sensitive on that point."

When he believed it necessary, and for reasons of his own, wished to hurry up the collection of a claim, he could act as in a letter to Henry Dummer, saying, "While I was at Beardstown, I forgot to tell you that William Butler says if you will give him charge, and full discretion, of a claim in your hands, against George G. Grubb, late of Springfield, now of Chicago, he knows how, and can and will make something out of it for you."

Sitting as a judge in Tazewell County, he heard two farmers testify against each other. Trowbridge had let a corner of his farm lands to Hartsfeller, who had raised a small crop of corn and cribbed it on the same land he raised it on. And Trowbridge had fenced his farm, turned his cattle in, and they had got to Hartsfeller's corn. Their stories told, Lincoln turned a keen eye on each of them, and said to the defendant, Trowbridge, "And you say you went over and fenced the corn after you asked him not to crib it on your land?" "Yes, sir." "Trowbridge, you have won your case."

He had been known to call himself a "jack-leg lawyer," just pegging along, or a "mast-fed" lawyer, referring to hogs fed on "mast" or acorns and other wild foods picked up by hogs let

loose to get up their own living in field and timberland. In the Dungey case, when opposing lawyers had the case thrown out of court because Lincoln had not drawn up his papers in a technically correct way, he leaned across the trial table, shook a long bony finger at them, and grinned, "Now, by jing, I'll beat you boys!" Which he did.

In the case of Samuel Short, living near Taylorville, Lincoln cleared him of charges of maliciously and feloniously firing a shotgun at boys stealing watermelons on Short's farm; Short didn't pay his fee and Lincoln collected it through a suit in the court of a justice of the peace. Ending a letter that notified a client his case was won, he wrote, "As the Dutch justice said when he married folks, 'Now vere ish my hundred dollars?'" There was a personal tang or smack in slight things he did. A man asked him for advice on a point of law and he told the man he'd have to look it up; meeting the man again, he gave him the advice wanted on that particular point of law; but when the man wished to know what the fee would be Lincoln answered that there would be no fee because it was a point he ought to have known without looking it up.

On Herndon asking him why he was so prompt in always paying Herndon half of the fees, the answer was: "Well, Billy, there are three reasons: first, unless I did so I might forget I had collected the money; secondly, I explain to you how and from whom I received the money, so that you will not be required to dun the man who paid it; thirdly, if I were to die you would have no evidence that I had your money."

Three or four cases were talked about among other lawyers, in which Lincoln had gone in as counsel for the defense, and as the evidence developed, he said to a colleague: "The man is guilty. You defend him; I can't. If I try to speak the jury will see that I think he is guilty, and convict him." Asked to help a litigant named Harris in a suit, his reply was, "Tell Harris it's no use to waste money on me in that case; he'll get beat." When a rapscallion claimed money was owing him and hired Lincoln to prove it, the opposition lawyer brought in a receipt

showing the money had been paid. Lincoln left the courtroom and was sitting in the hotel office with his feet on the stove when word came that he was wanted at court. "Tell the judge," he said, "that I can't come; I have to wash my hands." Joe Gillespie said, "I often listened to Lincoln when I thought he would certainly state his case out of court."

A client complained to Whitney about the way he and Lincoln had managed a case; Whitney tried to get Lincoln to smooth it over with the client, Lincoln's answer being, "Let him howl." Usually he was calm, bland, easy-going with other lawyers; but sometimes he wasn't; Amzi McWilliams, handling a witness on Lincoln's side of a case, called out, "Oh! No! No!! No!!!" which brought Lincoln to undoubling out of a chair with a slow yelling of, "Oh! Yes! Yes!! Yes!!!" putting a stop to the bulldozing of the witness. To a young lawyer he whispered, as the jury was filing out to vote on the case of a slippery client, "Better try and get your money now; if the jury comes in with a verdict for him, you won't get anything."

Another time he undoubled out of a chair when an opposition lawyer had told a jury, "You have been listening for the last hour to an actor, who knows well how to play the rôle of seeming, for effect"; Lincoln was solemn, cool, wrathy, and eying the other lawyer, said, "You have known me for years, and *you know* that not a word of that language can be truthfully applied to me." And part of what the other lawyer said was, "I take it all back, Mr. Lincoln."

A letter from Pekin asked about a land-title case, putting the question, "What is lacking to perfect a title on the part of the defendants?" Lincoln's reply stated: "The trouble with this deed was, that the plaintiff proved it to be a forgery; and I see no way in which the defendants can ever succeed unless they can somehow prove that the deed is not a forgery. This is the whole story. The case cannot be gained by much talking."

A Spoon River client was notified though he had justice and the law on his side he might not win the case. "This position of theirs seems absurd to me; and I found several authorities

against it; but they find one *for it,* and, worse than all, the Judge intimates that he is with them."

The widow of a Revolutionary War soldier told Lincoln that a pension agent named Wright had got her a payment from the Federal Government amounting to $400.00—and had kept half of it for himself as a commission. Lincoln told Herndon, "I am going to skin Wright and get that money back." He brought suit and put the tottering widow on the witness stand, where she told her story through her tears.

He told the jury, as Herndon recalled the speech: "She was not always thus. She was once a beautiful young woman. Her step was as elastic, her face as fair, and her voice as sweet as any that rang in the mountains of old Virginia. But now she is poor and defenseless. Out here on the prairies of Illinois, many hundreds of miles from the scenes of her childhood, she appeals to us, who enjoy the privileges achieved for us by the patriots of the Revolution, for our sympathetic aid and manly protection. All I ask is, shall we befriend her?" He pictured the sufferings of the soldiers of the Revolutionary War, and scored the defendant with fierce adjectives.

Some of the jurymen wept. The verdict gave the widow the full amount of money Wright had taken from her. Lincoln paid her hotel bill, bought her a railroad ticket back home, and later sent her the full amount of pension money—with no charge for lawyer's fees. Herndon had picked up Lincoln's notes for his speech to the jury. They read: "No contract.—No professional services.—Unreasonable charge.—Money retained by Def't not given by Pl'ff.—Revolutionary War.—Describe Valley Forge Privations.—Ice.—Soldiers' bleeding feet.—Pl'ff's husband.—Soldier leaving home for army.—Skin Def't.—Close."

E. J. Rice, a judge, made several rulings against Lincoln one morning in a murder trial, and he told Herndon at dinner, "I have determined to crowd the court to the wall." And as the trial went on that afternoon he gradually got the judge puzzled and lost. He read authorities to show that the great jurists and the lessons of the past were against the judge. He hurled facts and

questions fast from point to point, insulting the judge and making the court look ridiculous, while keeping clear of remarks that would lay him open to fine or reprimand for contempt of court. He was contemptuous of the court in manner, voice, insinuation, and allegation, without being technically guilty of contempt of court. It was a superb performance, as Bill Herndon saw it. "Figuratively speaking, he peeled the court from head to foot," said Herndon. "The judge reversed his decision in Lincoln's favor His client was acquitted of murder, and he swept the field. I shall never forget the scene."

Fifteen women came into court in Clinton; they had knocked in the heads of the whisky-barrels of a saloon in a near-by town, and were indicted for trespass. One woman called on Lincoln to help their lawyer, and he argued, "In this case I would change the order of indictment and have it read The State *vs.* Mr. Whisky instead of The State *vs.* The Ladies." He mentioned the Boston Tea Party, said the saloon keeper had neither feared God nor regarded man, gave some of his own observations on the ruinous effects of whisky on men and families. And the court dismissed the women, saying if they were to be fined he would let them know.

An odd case was put into his hands by Abraham Brokaw of Bloomington, who had sued a neighbor and had a debt collected by the sheriff, who went bankrupt; and Brokaw couldn't get his money. And so Brokaw put his case into the hands of Stephen A. Douglas, who sued the sheriff's bondsmen and collected the debt; but Brokaw couldn't get his money from Douglas.

Then he hired Lincoln to collect from Douglas. And Lincoln sent the claim to "Long John" Wentworth, the Chicago congressman and editor, who pushed the claim in Washington; and Douglas sniffed and almost snorted; but he paid Brokaw, who remarked to friends: "What do you suppose Lincoln charged me? Exactly three dollars and fifty cents for collecting nearly six hundred dollars." And Lincoln, asked about this low fee, replied: "I had no trouble with it. I sent it to my friend in Washington, and was only out the postage."

Though he made fifty speeches and traveled far, paying his own expenses in one campaign, he was surprised when a committee of Republicans in Champaign County called on him at his hotel and handed him $35.00. As he held the money, he asked, "What will I do with it?" looking puzzled and sheepish. "Put it in your pocket and keep it there," he was told. Which he did—but with a laughing demurrer, "Don't you fellows do that again."

A rich newcomer to Springfield wanted Lincoln to bring suit against an unlucky, crack-brained lawyer who owed him two dollars and a half; Lincoln advised him to hold off; he said he would go to some other lawyer who was more willing. So Lincoln took the case, collected a ten-dollar fee in advance, entered suit, hunted up the defendant and handed him half of the ten dollars and told him to show up in court and pay the debt. Which was done. And all litigants and the lawyer were satisfied.

A horse thief in the Champaign County jail told his local lawyer, William D. Somers, that he wanted Lincoln to help in the defense. When Lincoln and Somers arrived at the jail they found their client talking with his wife, who was in a delicate condition of health, as Lincoln noticed. When the client handed Lincoln ten dollars and said that was all the money he had, Lincoln looked at the woman again, and asked: "How about your wife? Won't she need this?" The answer was, "She'll get along somehow," which didn't satisfy Lincoln. He handed the woman five dollars, and divided the other five with Somers.

He lighted a candle one night and toiled on arguments to show that election bets don't have to be paid. Isaac Smith, the plaintiff in error, made a bet of $110.00 against a buggy owned by a man named Moffett, that the vote of Millard Fillmore for President of the United States was not behind the vote of the other candidates in the state of New York. The winner of the bet didn't call for his buggy, and the loser had traded it off so that it was gone from the stakeholder's barn when the winner came for his buggy. And Lincoln wrote: "Is this gambling debt contrary to the laws of this state, or public policy, or morality? And

this being the case, as we think it is, the seller of the buggy has a right to repent of the law's violation and to revoke the bet."

He made the point that betters can call off their bets. He cited the statutes against gambling, and wrote: "We think that betting on Presidential elections over the Union, or in particular states thereof, comes within the spirit of the laws; and if not such betting is contrary to public policy and morality and therefore void; i.e., that bets may be revoked while the decision is pending."

It appeared that Moffett had sold the buggy before he bet it, and Lincoln's brief stated, "This bet was revoked by sale to the plaintiff, long before the decision of the question by the stakeholder, and this repenting and revoking the law allows—yea, favors."

As Lincoln and Whitney stood near the courthouse in Decatur and he pointed to the exact place where he had driven into the town twenty-six years before with an all-wood ox-wagon and four yoke of steers, Whitney asked him if he expected then to be a lawyer. "No, I didn't know I had sense enough to be a lawyer."

Reading authorities in court once he suddenly read one against himself, and, drawing up his shoulders and half laughing, finished reading it, first saying: "There, may it please the court, I reckon I've scratched up a snake; but as I'm in for it, guess I'll read it through." On Whitney's asking him about a mixed point in law, he threw his head back, looked at the ceiling, and chuckled, "Damfino." Helping Whitney in a railroad case, when Whitney was worried about points the opposition was making, Lincoln told him, "All that is very easily answered." And when his time came, Whitney said, "He blew away what seemed to me almost an unanswerable argument as easily as a beer drinker blows off the froth from his foaming tankard."

Yet he had to take his losses at law practice; once he traveled all around the circuit, all his cases were for defendants, and he was beaten every time; so he told Bunn, the banker, in Springfield. And he told himself that people had said, without disturbing his self-respect, "Well, he isn't lawyer enough to hurt him."

In the parlor or barroom of a hotel, there was no telling of an evening whether he would spin yarns or conduct philosophic inquiries. "I have heard Lincoln," said Joe Gillespie, "descant upon the problem whether a ball discharged from a gun in a horizontal position would be longer in reaching the ground than one dropped at the instant of discharge from the muzzle."

As he spoke to juries, men felt that he believed what he had once said to the Washingtonian Temperance Society in Springfield: "There are few things wholly evil or wholly good; almost everything is an inseparable compound of the two." Once in Springfield he was one of five lawyers defending a woman and a man accused of murdering the woman's husband by poison. A handsome young man sat next to the woman, showed an interest in her, frisked around the courtroom, got law books and pointed out pages to Lincoln and other lawyers for the defense. And Usher F. Linder, an assistant prosecutor, began his speech to the jury after Lincoln and three other lawyers had spoken for the defense. Pointing his finger at the handsome young man who had sat next to the accused woman, Linder said, "Gentlemen of the jury, if you wanted any additional evidence of this man's guilt, it would only be necessary for you to recur to his boldness and impudence on this trial." He directed his index finger straight at the face of the young man and cried, "You can see guilt written all over his countenance." And the handsome young man arose and said with warm feeling: "General Linder, you are mistaken; I am not the criminal. My name is Rosette; I am a lawyer, and one of the counsel for the defendants."

Lincoln came to know in whispered consultation and public cross-examination the minds and hearts of a quarreling, chaffering, suspicious, murderous, loving, lavish, paradoxical humanity.

Lincoln defended a man who had thirty-five indictments against him for obstruction of the public highway. He took to the supreme court of the state a case involving a dispute over the payment of three dollars in a hog sale. He became versed

in the questions whether a saloon license can be transferred, whether damages can be collected from a farmer who starts a prairie fire that spreads to other farms, whether the divorced wife of a man can compel him to give her custody of her children, and to supply her the means for support of the children; these were causes in which Lincoln argued before the state supreme court. He also argued before that tribunal in cases involving wills, mortgages, notes, land titles, railroad condemnation proceedings, breaches of contract, validity of patents, ejectments, personal injury. A merchant set fire to his stock of goods, collected the insurance, bought a new stock, and was sued by the insurance company for the possession of the new stock. A man and his wife were put off a railroad train because they refused to pay excess cash fare, claiming that the station agent had no tickets to their point of destination; they sued the railroad company. A man named Banet sued the Alton & Sangamon Railroad Company because after he had subscribed for stock in their road they changed its route and ran the line of it twelve miles distant from his real-estate holdings in New Berlin.

Such were a few of the human causes, disputes, and actions in which Lincoln versed himself thoroughly, carrying his arguments up to the highest court in the state, and winning more than half of his cases there.

His memory was indexed and cross-indexed with tangled human causes.

Chapter 103

As the years passed there were stories of different kinds that got started about the lawyer and politician, Abe Lincoln, helping pigs that were in trouble. He would be riding along on horseback or in a buggy and see a pig caught under a fence or a gate or mired in mud, and he couldn't ride past without stopping

and helping the pig; one story had it that he saw a sow eating one of her own pigs and he got out of his buggy and took a club and beat the sow till she let go of her young one. Or a chickadee had fallen out of its nest in a hollow tree and he had to lift it back into its nest before he could ride on. Or a girl's doll had been knocked down and tramped on, and Lincoln picked it up, whisked the dust off and handed it to the girl, saying with a shine on his face: "There! Now your doll's all right."

These stories seemed to connect with an eager interest in all things moving and alive around him, the growing crops, boys fighting, shirts on a clothesline in the wind, watermelon time, hot cornbread, talk about apple parings, quiltings, shucking-bees, the camp meetings where the ransomed sang to the lost and there was the warning, "You're hangin' to the hinges of time by a hair."

Sometimes the circuit lawyers drove across the prairie on trails through sloughs where the mud was up to the hubs, or across creeks swollen by rains, through sleet and snow, with mittens soaked wet and the leather reins slippery. In zero weather they often broke the ice in the pitchers of the hotel room to wash their faces in the morning. There were winter nights when they piled the cordwood on the fire and talked. There were days when for miles along the road the farmers, with the reins slung over their backs and shoulders, had their hands on the plow-handles, calling to the horses, and sending the steel plowshares into the ground, turning over the soil into long shining black furrows. There were Indian summer days when a smoke haze filled the horizons; the earth seemed to rest and take soft breaths.

On such a day Lincoln and Leonard Swett were on a fifty-mile drive from De Witt County to Champaign. Tall brown grass swayed in the wind; across far lengths of grass there was a quiver of waves as though wind were running across water; here and there a bluejay flitted in a red-haw tree and sent a screech to his mate; under the haw tree was a sprinkle

of red dots, the recurring autumn spatter of red haws; a brown deer scampered out of a stand of hazel brush; and the sleepy Indian summer haze filled the horizons.

And on Swett's asking him to tell where he came from as a boy and how he grew up, Lincoln told of the events that came to his mind, the dirt-floor cabin in Kentucky, the selling out and the going to Indiana. "It was pretty pinching times at first in Indiana, getting the cabin built, and the timber cleared for crops." The mother, Nancy Hanks, and the stepmother, Sally Bush, were both good to him. Then at Anderson Creek he had earned a half-dollar, taking a passenger off a boat from midstream to the bank of the Ohio; afterward, as he played on a flatboat, the half-dollar slipped away into the river. "I can see the quivering and shining of that half-dollar yet, as it went down the stream and sunk from my sight forever." And then . . . New Orleans, Illinois, New Orleans again, New Salem, the Black Hawk War, election as captain, and with a smile, "I can't tell you how much the idea of being the captain of that company pleased me." Then storekeeping, the legislature, four dollars a day, law practice, Springfield, Washington.

And Swett, the shrewd lawyer, said the story as Lincoln told it was full of chuckles, with sometimes high laughter that interrupted the whistle of the quail in the dun cat-tails. He wasn't sorry for himself, this Lincoln of Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois; he had had a swift, rich life full of action; hunger and struggle had been good for him; he had no regrets worth mentioning to Swett; he wouldn't mind living it all over again; so it seemed to Swett, who was sharp at reading men's minds.

On a thirty-six-mile drive from Urbana to Danville there were songs and stories all the way, as Whitney told it. "We had no hesitation in stopping at a farmhouse and ordering them to kill and cook a chicken for dinner. By dark we reached Danville. Lamon would have whisky in his office for the drinking ones, and those who indulged in petty gambling would get by themselves and play till late in the night. Lincoln, Davis, and a few local wits would spend the evening in Davis's room.

talking politics, wisdom, and fun. We who stopped at the hotel would all breakfast together and frequently go out in the woods and hold court. The feelings were those of a great fraternity in the bar, and if we desired to restrict our circle it was no trouble for Davis to freeze out any disagreeable persons. Lincoln was fond of going all by himself to any little show or concert. I have known him to slip away and spend the entire evening at a little magic-lantern show intended for children. He had the appearance of a rough, intelligent farmer, and his rude, home-made buggy and rawboned horse enforced this belief."

On the same thirty-six-mile drive one October night, there were Lincoln, Swett and his wife, and Whitney in a two-seated carriage; dark had come on as they rode into a river-bottom road in heavy timber with deep ditches alongside; and the horses and hubs plugged through mud. The driver stopped the horses; some one would have to go ahead and pilot; he didn't want to tip over as one of Frink & Walker's stages had done. Whitney jumped out, Lincoln after him; they rolled up their trousers, and arm in arm went ahead, calling back every minute or so. Lincoln sang, "Mortal man with face of clay, Here tomorrow, gone today," and other verses that he made up. They drove into Danville later laughing at October night weather and autumn mud.

As the lawyers on the circuit slept six and eight in a room, one of them, Lawrence Weldon, noticed that Lincoln was out of his bed earlier than the others, and usually would poke among the charcoals of the fire, stir up a warmth of flame, and then sit with long thoughts, sometimes talking to himself. Once, on such a morning, in the town of Lincoln, Weldon heard him say over the quaint keepsake of his memory, the poem, "Oh, Why Should the Spirit of Mortal Be Proud?" The verses wouldn't have sounded the same, wouldn't have been so solemn and musical if somebody else said them, Weldon believed—they seemed to fit Lincoln. It was the same Weldon who came to Lincoln in a courtroom with a document he wanted explained, and Lincoln was trying to connect his suspenders to his trousers

at a point where a button had come off; he told Weldon, "Wait till I fix this plug of my gallus and I'll pitch into that like a dog at a root." The range of the serious and comic ran wide and far in him.

Speaking from a platform in front of the Menard County courthouse, he was interrupted three times by a call of "Howdy, Abe!" and then located his old friend, James Pantier, hunter, trapper, faith healer, sawmill owner, and farmer. He stooped over and shook hands, saying, "Why, how are you, Uncle Jimmy?" and, still holding hands, he led Pantier up on the platform and put him in his own chair where Pantier in his blue jeans shirt with buckskin lacings sat between two lawyers in "biled" shirts.

The old hunter sat twisting his hat; wind and weather had worn the brim off it; he saw Lincoln's stovepipe hat under the chair, half full of letters, papers, notes; there he shoved his hat; it was out of his restless fingers. Yet he had forgotten something; he couldn't keep quiet; he leaned forward, hands on his knees and elbows out, and called: "Abe! Abe! I forgot to ax you about how Mary and the babies were." And Lincoln turned from his speech and said in a low voice: "All well when I left them at Springfield yesterday morning, Uncle Jimmy; all very well, thank you."

Members of the American or Know-Nothing party called on him and he asked them: "Who are the native Americans? Do they not wear the breechclout and carry the tomahawk? We pushed them from their homes, and now turn on others not fortunate enough to come over so early as we or our forefathers." And he drifted into a little anecdote of an Irishman named Pat who had asked, "Mr. Lincoln, what do yez think of these Know-Nothings?" After telling Pat his views, he asked Pat why he had not been born in America. To which Pat answered, "Faith, I wanted to, but me mother wouldn't let me."

He kept odd happenings in his mind and would tell about them. "As I was going up the path to the house of Dave Lowry in Pekin, some boys were playing marbles near the walk. I

stopped and put my hand on the head of Mr. Lowry's boy and said, 'My boy, you're playing marbles!' The boy looked up and replied, 'Any damn fool ought to see that.' "

Often when he was supposed to look and act important, he simply couldn't fill the part or he wouldn't try. He was so easy, so quietly gay and careless, that respectable people found him hard to analyze. The state supreme court, for instance, had appointed Lincoln a member of a committee to examine young law students. When Jonathan Birch came to the hotel in Bloomington to be examined by Lincoln for admission to the bar, Lincoln asked three or four questions about contracts and other law branches. And then, as Birch told it: "He asked nothing more. Sitting on the edge of the bed he began to entertain me with recollections, many of them vivid and racy, of his start in the profession." Birch couldn't figure out whether it was a real examination or a joke. But Lincoln gave him a note to Judge Logan, another member of the examining committee, and he took the note to Logan, and without any more questions was given a certificate to practice law. The note from Lincoln read:

My Dear Judge:

The bearer of this is a young man who thinks he can be a lawyer. Examine him if you want to. I have done so and am satisfied. He's a good deal smarter than he looks to be.

Yours,
Lincoln.

Driving cross-country, he stopped at the house of Jack and Hannah Armstrong for a midday lunch. Hannah put a quart bowl of buttermilk before him, and the bowl slipped from his hands and spilled over the table and his clothes; Hannah was telling him not to mind it in the least, it would be all right in a minute, such things do happen. And he took the towel she handed him, slowly wiped the milk off his clothes, put the towel over his knees, and leaning back said, "Well, Aunt Hannah, if you don't mind it, neither will I."

Having told a Peoria audience that he was willing Judge Douglas should have an hour to reply to his speech, he noted, "By giving him the close, I felt confident that you would stay for the fun of hearing him skin me." At the Springfield state fair Judge Douglas rose while Lincoln was speaking, and, denying an allegation by Lincoln, said: "No, sir! I will tell you what was the origin of the Nebraska Bill. It was this, sir! God created man, and placed before him both good and evil, and left him free to choose for himself. That was the origin of the Nebraska Bill." And Lincoln, with a lurking smile in the corners of his mouth, replied, "Well, then, I think it is a great honor to Judge Douglas that he was the first man to discover that fact." And laughter came from the audience.

A lawyer in a hog case used much showy language mixed with the word "pigs"; he had to say "pigs" because that was the specific property involved; Lincoln remarked, "He must ape Demosthenes, even if the subject is only pigs." Of T. Lyle Dickey, he commented, "He can draw such fine distinctions, where I can't see any distinction, yet I have no doubt a distinction does exist." As against showy language and overly fine-spun distinctions, he wanted what he called "the naked merits of the case."

Whitney at Danville once complained to Lincoln that he was getting hardly any law business. Lincoln said: "You have as much business here as I used to have; I listened to a French street peddler's antics here half a day once, simply because I hadn't a particle of business."

Tricks of mind and tongue as between Lincoln and others were noted by Whitney: "No one could ever use the term 'facsimile' in Lincoln's presence without his adding 'sick family'; if any one used the expression 'idem sonans,' in common use as a law term, he would always say 'id sons,' and Davis, if there, would add, 'Seth Post,' all of which meant that Captain Post of Decatur used the term improperly in that way. A leader of the proslavery party in Kansas was H. Clay Pate, a vain popinjay who used to get his name in the papers; and whenever Lincoln

heard his name mentioned, he would echo, "H. Mud Pate." At Pekin, Lincoln was attorney for the winning side in a case that had been appealed, continued, and again appealed so many times that the record looked like a long one as the judge started to read it. He stopped reading and asked, "What does this mean, Mr. Lincoln?" "Harassment, your Honor," was the short reply.

A fuddy-duddy judge corrected Lincoln's pronunciation of the word "lien" as "lean" saying it should be as "lion." In a minute or two Lincoln again pronounced the word his way, and again being corrected apologized, "As you please, your honor." And slipping again and the judge again correcting, he replied, "If my client had known there was a *lion* on his farm he wouldn't have stayed there long enough to bring this suit." When the Supreme Court, made up of three judges, all from Oneida County, New York, ruled against Lincoln so he lost his case, he was asked by S. T. Logan, "How did you like the decision?" and answered, "It's all that can be expected from a Oneida (one-idea) court."

In a dispute between William Butcher and John M. Gipps as to which of the two was the owner of a piano and a colt named Sampson, Lincoln represented Butcher. One paragraph of Lincoln's brief read, "To the fifth interrogatory, he says he did not tell Mr. Gipps and his wife or either of them that he was too smart to leave that evidence on the said Book, and that he did not put his thumb to the side of his nose, and significantly extend the fingers of the same hand, indicating his shrewdness on that subject."

Lincoln carried to the supreme court, at the October term of 1853, a case involving "a scrub male hog." The defendant, his client, lost $3.00. The report of the case read in part: "The defendant proved that he went to plaintiff's house, and the plaintiff not being at home, he told his wife that he had come for his hog. She answered that he had better not take the hog until her husband came home. He returned next day and demanded the hog, when plaintiff answered he did not believe the hog was his. . . . Plaintiff had been heard hallooing

to the dogs of the witness to worry the hog, and afterwards the hog was found dead."

The decision of the supreme court was emphatically against Lincoln and his client. "We are forced to the conclusion that plaintiff had been trespassed upon by the hog for two or three years, and had repeatedly tried, without success, either to drive the hog away, or to keep him either in, or outside his cornfields. The hog had been unmarked and ownerless for years, and plaintiff had at last determined to fatten him for a tenant's use, supposing him to have been left by a former tenant. The proofs are so convincing to us, that there is no room for argument, or application of principles of law."

He enjoyed, in certain moods, language stripped naked. A rich lawyer and taxpayer of Bloomington, named Gridley, in a misdemeanor case, discussed the ways and conduct of his home-city government, where there were high taxes. "He used language which would have reflected a brilliant carnation lustre on the pages of the Decameron or Rabelais," Whitney noted. "Lincoln was entranced by reason of the wit and extreme radicalism of the language used. He would turn to me and whisper, every few moments, 'Don't he *dew* that well?' That sort of thing suited Lincoln, but I never heard coarser language in a court in session."

He picked his companions by what they could do for him at the time he wanted something done, Whitney also noted. "As a constant habit he chose as his opponent at billiards a bibulous lawyer of no merit save the negative one of playing billiards as awkwardly and badly as Lincoln himself; it was a strange but not unfamiliar sight to see these two men, who had nothing else in common, playing billiards in an obscure place, sometimes for hours together." And Whitney also wished to note that billiards was the only "non-utilitarian thing" that he ever knew Lincoln to indulge in. However, he had written rhymed verse and learned that he was more skilled in other forms of writing. The young man, Gibson W. Harris, whom Mrs. Lincoln called, "Mr. Mister," arranging books and papers

in the office one day, found two or three quires of letter paper stitched together in book form, filled with verses in the Lincoln handwriting. When the manuscript was shown to Lincoln, he took it, asked, "Where did you find it?" and, rolling it up, put it in his coat pocket, and it was never heard of again from Lincoln. There was doggerel such as "The Bear Hunt" which he didn't care to have people read.

There was about Whitney a little of the same streak of lavender, soft spots of sentiment, that Lincoln had met in Josh Speed. He talked freely of many wise, shrewd, gay, nonsensical things to Whitney between times on the circuit. To him Lincoln once wrote, "How miserably things seem to be arranged in this world! If we have no friends we have no pleasure, and if we have them we are sure to lose them and be doubly pained by the loss." As Whitney was leaving Bloomington one day he stepped carefully into a courtroom, hoping to say a quiet good-by to Lincoln, who that day was presiding over the court in place of Judge Davis. Lincoln saw his friend and the look on his friend's face, and he dropped court proceedings and said so that all heard, as he reached over and shook hands, "Great good luck to you! Great good luck to you, Whitney!"

He had taken to the supreme court a case for an orphan, Rebecca Daimwood, who had been cheated out of a piece of land by her guardian, John Lane. While the supreme court was considering the case she had married a young farmer, William Dorman. And they were poor in worldly goods. Lincoln won their case, and the newly married couple came to him asking what he was going to charge them. They had heard about lawyers; he might want as much as the little piece of land was worth. And he told them all he would ask would be their thanks; they might take his services as a wedding present. This was the Dorman and Lane case about which Lincoln wrote to Samuel Marshall, the lawyer handling it at Shawneetown, when Lincoln ended his letter, "Nothing new here except my marriage, which to me is a matter of profound wonder." He had some

extra and special feeling about Rebecca Daimwood and William Dorman getting married; they could have his fee for a wedding present.

When he rode the circuit and likewise when he was at home in Springfield there were little things that interested him, but they were different from the little things that interested a good many other people. He could enjoy watching a duck trying to teach its little one to swim; he played marbles with boys when a grown man, enjoyed holding kittens in his hands. He talked over with Herndon his own theory as to why, when he was kicked by a horse in Indiana and woke to his senses, he finished the sentence he had started to say just as the horse kicked him. The general run of small gossip and community chatter didn't interest him. Herndon noticed: "He didn't care who succeeded to the presidency of this or that association; who made the most money; who was going to Philadelphia, when and for what, and what were the costs of such a trip; who got to be street inspector or alley commissioner." And Whitney noticed: "It would have been considered absurd to propose him for chairman of a meeting or convention. Immersed in politics as he was, he never presided over a caucus or political meeting."

Others said, and he said it himself: he had no money sense. Davis, Logan, Bunn, Fell, and other friends whom he saw often were getting hold of farms and thousand-acre tracts of land. Investments, speculations, and schemes for developing property beckoned and whispered to others, but not to him. His field was law, for the earning of a living, and politics, for other reasons. At hotels he took what was offered him with no complaint. He told Joe Gillespie he never felt easy when a waiter or a flunky was around; he could look a murderer in the eye on the witness stand, and be comfortable, but a hotel clerk made him feel sort of useless. When he did drop in at a meeting of Republican editors in Decatur once, he said he was a sort of interloper, and told of a woman on horseback meeting a man riding a horse on a narrow trail or pass. The woman

stopped her horse, looked the man over, and broke out, "Well, for the land's sake, you are the homeliest man I ever saw!" The man replied, "Yes, ma'am, but I can't help that," and the woman again, "No, I suppose not, but you might stay at home."

When Judge Davis appointed him to hold court one day, he heard the evidence brought by a clothing merchant trying to collect $28.00 for a suit of clothes sold to the minor son of a rich farmer; the real question was whether the son needed the clothes, having bought them without his father's permission; Lincoln ruled that the suit of clothes was not necessary, saying, "I have never in my life worn a suit costing $28.00."

To a New York firm that wrote asking him about the financial standing of a Springfield man, he replied:

> Yours of the 10th received. First of all, he has a wife and a baby; together they ought to be worth $500,000 to any man. Secondly, he has an office in which there is a table worth $1.50 and three chairs worth, say, $1. Last of all, there is in one corner a large rat-hole, which will bear looking into.
>
> Respectfully,
> A. Lincoln.

One of his boys pronounced the word "gentleman" with the "g" hard, as in "gas"; and Lincoln told friends about it as if it pleased him to have the dignity of the word "gentleman" mussed up. Several times before posing for an ambrotype he ran his fingers through his hair to rumple it properly; often on the stump or during jury speeches his hands wandered over the top of his head and put the hair into disorder. Always, it was noticed, the linen he wore was clean; his barbers didn't let the sign of a beard start; he blacked his own boots. As to shirts and shaves he was clean and neat; as to haircuts, grammar, and technicalities, he wasn't so particular; in many jury arguments and in his "Missouri Compromise Speech" in Springfield, he wiped the sweat off his face with a red silk handkerchief. In the 1856 campaign, going from town to town, he would formally meet a wagonload of pretty girls in white dresses, one for each state in the Union. And he had to end his little speech

to them by saying, "I also thank you for your present of this beautiful basket of flowers." He didn't enjoy this part of campaigning, he told Whitney; it pleased the young people, so he went through with it.

He took the case of a woman who was injured on a defective city sidewalk in Alton. As the mayor of Alton, Joseph Brown, later told the affair: "A lady by the name of Mrs. McReady came to Alton on one of the Keokuk packets to give Shakespearean lectures, arriving at 2 o'clock in the morning, and, as luck would have it, she stepped on an old cellar door in front of Johnny Roe's grocery and one leg went part way through the door so that it sprained her ankle and laid her up at the Franklin House for some time. She put in a claim against the city for damages, but the city refused to allow anything, and the result was, as she was permanently lamed, she sued for $5,000.00 in the United States court at Springfield, and engaged Mr. Lincoln as her attorney."

The mayor of Alton went to Lincoln at Springfield and they negotiated. Lincoln: "Mr. Brown, I don't like to take this suit against your town; can't we compromise it in some way?" Brown: "I don't see how we can, as we don't think the city is liable for an injury done to the lady by a man having bad cellar doors." Lincoln: "But the city is liable for its sidewalks, and I feel sure we can get judgment; I think it is best to compromise if we can. How much will you give the lady? She is lamed for life with a stiff ankle." Brown: "I can't make any offer; we have no money." Lincoln: "Will you give her $3,000.00?" Brown: "No, there isn't that much money in the town." They compromised at $1,500.00, Brown asking, "If we give the $1,500.00, are we to have the damaged limb?" Lincoln replying, "I will go over and ask," coming back later to tell Brown, "If you are an unmarried man, and as you are pretty good-looking, you can have the entire woman!" Brown declared later, "We compromised, but I did not accept the lady's marriage offer."

He carried a worn copy of Shakespeare, and sometimes read out loud to a roomful of lawyers in a hotel "The Earthquake

Story" from "The Flush Times in Alabama." He read Joe Miller's joke book and repeated some of the jokes on the circuit, though he had a thousand fresher ones of his own; they seemed to sprout by the waysides of his travel. Some of his stories were only for picked and particular listeners, as in the case of one with a line, "If the court understand *herself* and she think she do." When Ward Lamon had a large section of the rear of his trousers torn out in scuffling in front of the courthouse, and was later acting as counsel in a case that same day, a paper was passed around among the lawyers asking contributions for the repair of the trousers; Lincoln wrote, "I can contribute nothing to the end in view."

Of old man Krone at the Macon House in Decatur, he had a tale of a man riding up one night and asking, "Landlord, can I stay here tonight?" And the old man gazed off into the sky, rubbed his chin thoughtfully, and gave no answer. On the rider again asking his question and getting no answer, he rode on into the next county, came back the next day, and again pulled in on his horse and was going to ask the landlord if he could stay that night, when the landlord spoke and said, "I reckon so"—in reply to the question of the day before. And there was the anecdote of John Moore, south of Blooming Grove, driving a yoke of red steers to Bloomington one Saturday, starting home with a jug, and emptying the jug into himself; when he drove through a piece of timber one of the wheels of the cart hit a stump and threw the pole out of the ring of the yoke. The steers ran away; Moore slept till morning in the cart, and when he awoke and looked around, he said: "If my name is John Moore, I've lost a pair of steers; if my name ain't John Moore, I've found a cart."

As Richard Oglesby, who had visited England, was once telling how he saw the British queen at a reception, how the queen looked, what she wore, how she spoke and carried herself, Lincoln put in a question, asking Oglesby with a grave face, "Are we to infer that you have a speaking acquaintance with Queen Victoria?"

A touch of Æsop, the fable maker, was in him. "If three pigeons sit on a fence and you shoot and kill one of them, how many will be left?" he asked. The answer was, "Two, of course." To which Lincoln responded, "No, there won't, for the other two will fly away." And to illustrate a point, he told this one: "A man on foot, with his clothes in a bundle, coming to a stream which he must ford, made elaborate preparations by stripping off his garments, adding them to his bundle, and, tying all to the top of a stick, which enabled him to raise the bundle high over his head to keep them dry during the crossing. He then fearlessly waded in and carefully made his way across the rippling stream, and found it in no place up to his ankles." In a law case having to do with hogs breaking through a fence and damaging crops, he told a story about a fence that was so crooked that whenever a hog went through a hole in that crooked fence, it always came out on the same side from which it started.

And it was told that once when Lincoln heard a farmer bragging too big about the size of a hay crop that year, he said that he had helped to raise hay one year, and when it came harvest time, "We stacked all we could outdoors, and then we put the rest of it in the barn." On a paper written by a lawyer, with too many words and pages, he remarked, "It's like the lazy preacher that used to write long sermons, and the explanation was, he got to writin' and was too lazy to stop."

He sat with his client, Charles Hoyt, on buffalo robes in the Blackhawk store on River Street in Aurora, and talked for hours about their case. Later he had it in such shape that he cautioned Hoyt, "Make no movement about costs till after next term, lest this should stir them up to reinstate the cases." Then finally he wrote: "Our case is decided against us. Very sorry but there is no help. I do not think I could ever have argued the case better than I did. I did nothing else but prepare to argue and argue the case from Friday morning to Monday evening. Very sorry for the result, but I do not think it could have been prevented."

A little dried-up old man wearing a red blouse used to come

regularly the first day of court in Urbana, and Lincoln and he would sit out in the courtyard; the old man thought he had a claim on some real estate; Lincoln listened; the old man had hopes; at the next term of court he would come again in his red blouse with his face lit up; he had a title to property; they would go to law and make his title clear; Lincoln listened; they met again and over again, the old man talking about his claims, his hopes—till there was a term of court when he couldn't come, when he was through with claims and hopes on earth. Lincoln somehow felt a kinship to this little old man in a red blouse.

His own failures as storekeeper and inventor probably were vivid to him when a client Hildreth sued Alexander Edmunds of Mount Pulaski. Hildreth gave Edmunds $2,000 worth of land for the county rights to sell a "Horological Cradle." Lincoln's bill declared "the said Edmunds professed to have invented an horological cradle which was to be rocked by machinery, with a weight running on one or more pulleys; the cradle constituting the pendulum, and which, being wound up, would rock itself until it run down, and so save the continual labor to mothers and nurses, of rocking the cradle." The higher court held that Edmunds did not patent a principle for a self-rocking cradle; he had merely patented a design for a cradle, the specifications being for an "ornamental design, in the shape or configuration of horological cradles, and of ornamental designs to be worked thereon."

The decree of Judge David Davis in the lower court that Edmunds should convey the $2,000 piece of land back to Hildreth was reversed by the upper court, and Lincoln had to comfort his client. While working on the case Lincoln set up a specimen "horological cradle" in his office, and explained its workings to visitors. When Bunn, the banker, asked how to stop the contraption when in motion, Lincoln laughed, "There's the rub, and I reckon I'll have to answer you as I did the judge who asked the same question: the thing's like some of the glib and interesting talkers you and I know; when it gets going it doesn't know when to stop."

Looking along Adams Street at Fifth, from the Springfield public square in 1858. Lincoln saw these three- and four-storey brick structures shove out the one- and two-storey frame shacks.

Photograph from Oliver R. Barrett Collection

West side of Square, Springfield, 1858. Office of Lincoln and Herndon on second floor in rear of building indicated by X. In Chatterton's jewelry store Lincoln bought, for his bride, a plain gold wedding ring inscribed, "Love is eternal."

Photograph from Oliver R. Barrett Collection

At the old Macon House in Decatur, he helped unload and screw into place the first piano to arrive in central Illinois. It had come by steamer down the Ohio River, up the Wabash to Crawfordsville, Indiana, and by wagon to Decatur. At dinner that day in the Macon House, Mother Krone told the diners, "Men, if you can't get your teeth through this beef you will have to fall back on the sausage." Jane Martin led in a program of musical numbers that evening for the judge and members of the bar of the Eighth Circuit. And she later told of that program: "For show pieces, I played the 'Battle of Prague' and the 'Carnival of Venice,' then followed with 'Washington's March,' 'Come Haste to the Wedding,' and 'Woodup Quick Step,' to convince the audience I did know a tune or two. For tragedy, I sang Henry Russell's 'Maniac' and 'The Ship on Fire,' and then made their blood run cold with the wild wail of 'The Irish Mother's Lament.' For comic, we sang 'The Widdy McGee' and 'I Won't be a Nun," topping off with 'Old Dan Tucker,' 'Lucy Long,' and 'Jim Crow,' the crowd joining in the chorus. These were followed by more serious music. Mr. Brown and Mr. Swett joined me in the duet 'Moonlight, Music, Love, and Flowers,' 'Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep,' 'Pilgrim Fathers,' 'Bonaparte's Grave,' and 'Kathleen Mavourneen.' Each and all met with applause. As a finale, I sang 'He Doeth All Things Well,' after which Mr. Lincoln, in a very grave manner, thanked me for the evening's entertainment, and said, 'Don't let us spoil that song by any other music tonight.' "

High pretensions didn't wear easy with Lincoln; he wrote to Owen Lovejoy, "As to my personal movements this summer and fall, I am quite busy trying to pick up my lost crumbs of last year." To a long letter from Whitney as to whether he would undertake a certain case, he returned papers with the message, "Count me in."

A pithy or quizzical wisdom ran through many of his letters, often in the closing sentence. "Let all be so quiet that the adversary shall not be notified," he wrote before an election. A lengthy epistle ended, "As to an extra session of the legislature,

I should know no better how to bring that about than to lift myself over a fence by the straps of my boots." To one law student, "Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any other one thing"; to another, "Work, work, work, is the main thing." And again before an election, "If we can head off the fraudulent votes we shall carry the day." After showing that certain political results would surely come in a three-cornered contest, he added, "This is as plain as adding up the weight of three small hogs."

Wishing good cheer to Galesburg Republicans, he wrote, "Stand by the *cause,* and the cause will carry you through." The keynote of some letters was, "I am not complaining—I only wish a fair understanding." And of course he gave himself often the same warning he sent a friend, "I must repeat that I think the thing did not originate in malice to you, or to any one, and that the best way all round is to now forget it."

In his copy of Bacon he could read that to win power is to get a foothold where the standing is slippery. "All rising to great place is by a winding stair."

Chapter 104

Up in the northwest corner of Illinois is a rocky country where there are lead mines, and the city of Galena sits among high, hard bluffs. In the year 1856 a man named Grant had a wholesale leather store there, the largest in the Northwest; in Kentucky he had a tannery; and living near St. Louis he had a son named Ulysses Simpson Grant, who was farming, teaming, raising hay, grubbing stumps and hauling wood to sell in St. Louis, a quiet man who was a Democrat in politics and was going to vote for Buchanan for President; he believed in Stephen A. Douglas more than any one else at Washington, and he had a feeling that Douglas was mainly right in charging Republicans with being disunionists.

This was the charge that Abraham Lincoln answered in a

speech at Galena that year. He asked the opposition to show where the Republicans in their platforms, speeches, conventions, had spoken in favor of dissolving the Union. He pointed to the physical force apparatus that would stop disunion. "With the purse and sword, the army and navy and treasury in our hands and at our command, you could not do it. This government would be very weak indeed if a majority with a disciplined army and navy and a well-filled treasury could not preserve itself when attacked by an unarmed, undisciplined, unorganized minority." His farther thoughts had ranged seriously around the overthrow of the Government.

The Galena neighborhood had always piled up its majorities for Douglas and the Democratic ticket, and he warned them: "All this talk about the dissolution of the Union is humbug, nothing but folly. We do not want to dissolve the Union; you shall not."

This was the summer that saw the first national ticket of the Republican party put in the field, with John C. Frémont and William L. Dayton as candidates for President and Vice President. And though he was so closely following national politics and writing confidential letters of advice as to a presidential candidate, it happened that when the newspapers arrived in Urbana with the information that a person named Lincoln had stood second highest in the balloting for vice-presidential candidate of the Republican party, receiving 110 votes as against 259 for Dayton, the nominee, and getting the total votes of the Illinois and Indiana delegations, Lincoln, the circuit lawyer at Urbana, laughed it off to Judge Davis and Henry C. Whitney, saying carelessly to his excited friends: "I reckon that ain't me; there's another great man in Massachusetts named Lincoln and I reckon it's him."

In the campaign that followed, Lincoln delivered more than fifty speeches north and south in the state; he traveled by railroad, stage, buggy, and wagon; when committees met him and escorted him to the hall or courthouse or the grove where the steer was over the fire for a barbecue, he was easy to pick out

as the speaker of the day; at the end of his long body and head was a long stovepipe hat that made him look longer; a lengthy linen duster made him look still lengthier; with a little satchel in one hand and a faded brownish green umbrella in the other, he looked as though he came from somewhere and was going somewhere.

On the platform he asked what was the question between the two parties headed by Buchanan and Frémont, answering: "Simply this, Shall slavery be allowed to extend into United States territories now legally free? Buchanan says it shall, and Frémont says it shall not. That is the naked issue and the whole of it." After everything could be said, his advice to the voter was: "If he shall really think that slavery ought to be extended, let him go to Buchanan; if he think it ought not, let him go to Frémont."

He pointed to the slavery issue as not so much a sectional question as a property matter. "The slaves of the South, at a moderate estimate, are worth a thousand million of dollars. Let it be permanently settled that this property may extend to new territory without restraint, and it greatly enhances, perhaps quite doubles, its value at once."

Then he went into political history. Not in twelve years had there been a southern President or candidates for President from the South. "Their conventions of 1848, 1852, 1856, have been struggles exclusively among northern men, each vying to outbid the other for the southern vote; the South standing calmly by to finally cry 'Going, going, gone' to the highest bidder."

He pointed to the southern politicians, saying, "Give us the measures and you take the men." In the South were candidates for the Presidency, but, "See how it works. If a southern man aspires to be President, they choke him down constantly, in order that the glittering prize of the Presidency may be held up on southern terms to the greedy eyes of northern ambition. With this they tempt us and break in upon us."

He named the northern politicians, Douglas, Pierce, Cass, Buchanan, who had fished for southern indorsement for the

Presidency. He asked simple questions in short simple words as to slavery being sectional. "Who can help it? Either side can help it; but how? Simply by yielding to the other side; there is no other way; in the whole range of possibility there is no other way. Then, which side shall yield? To this, again, there can be but one answer—the side which is in the wrong."

Lincoln was out to build up the Republican party, and elect the state ticket and put Illinois on the map as a Republican stronghold. The tone of the campaign in many districts was indicated during one week of politics in Bloomington. A Democratic paper, *The Flag,* gave an account of a Democratic meeting which was interrupted by the passing of a wagon carrying a Frémont and Dayton banner. *The Flag* account said: "The rowdies that were posted on the outside of the crowd raised a shout for Frémont, and a rowdyish rabble started for the wagon. By the interference of some Democrats, together with Messrs. Lincoln and Swett, they were prevented from entering the ground. So they contented themselves with shouting and otherwise disturbing the meeting. To the honor and credit of our Republican friends in Bloomington, we will state that this disgraceful, ungentlemanly, and cowardly attempt to interrupt a public meeting, originated in the low, groveling, and contemptible brain of a certain doctor of Cheney's Grove, followed by a gang of lesser lights, including a certain not very high-toned doctor of this city, with other rowdies picked up on their way whose names we might mention, and *may* take occasion to do so yet; but will forbear for the present."

On the same evening Lincoln spoke upstairs over Humphrey's Cheap Store, in Major's Hall. The *Weekly Pantagraph* said: "Tuesday evening, last week, while the Democrats were listening to their speakers in front of the Pike House, Mr. Lincoln had a crowded roomful at Major's Hall, who listened with intense interest to a most masterly speech, in which he tore the daytime speeches of the Bucks at their great meeting into ribbons." On the night following, the Republicans had a meeting at the courthouse, with speeches in German; and the night after that Leonard

Swett spoke in Major's Hall, supported by a Glee Club consisting of two ladies and three gentlemen; so the *Pantagraph* informed its readers.

The sober and religious young man, Henry Rankin, who was studying law in the Lincoln & Herndon office, saw a young man come into the office one day and begin to argue with Herndon that Millard Fillmore ought to be elected President because he was a "good" man and his "goodness" extraordinary. Lincoln sat at a table writing. As the argument went on he kept on writing. But when he finished writing and took his hat and was leaving the office he stopped and looked into the face of the young man who was so lit up over Fillmore as a "good" man.

Lincoln had known this lad for years, and he spoke the slow words: "My young friend, I think you are making a mistake in voting for Mr. Fillmore because of his goodness. You can do something so much better. There is One whose goodness and greatness all agree far exceed Mr. Fillmore's and, in fact, all others that could be named. No one will question this; no one doubts it. So on the 6th of next November I advise you to go to the polls and vote for Almighty God for President. He is unquestionably the best being that exists. There is practically as much chance of electing God Almighty President of the United States at this time, as Millard Fillmore." That was all Lincoln wished to say. He left. The young man came into the office a few days later and told Lincoln he wasn't going to throw away his vote but would cast his ballot for Frémont.

A surprisingly radical antislavery sentiment had developed in the northern central part of the state, where Lincoln's colleague, Swett, was beaten for the congressional nomination by an outspoken Abolitionist, Owen Lovejoy, of Princeton, a brother of the Elijah Lovejoy whose printing presses had been thrown into the Mississippi River, and who had been mobbed and killed nearly twenty years before at Alton. "It turned me blind," Lincoln wrote Whitney, "when I first heard Swett was beaten and Lovejoy nominated; but, after much reflection, I really believe

it is best to let it stand. This, of course, I wish to be confidential." He had spoken at a large Fourth of July mass meeting in a picnic grove at Princeton, but had not correctly gauged the Lovejoy organization.

In Petersburg, only two miles from his old New Salem hilltop, he met opposition. He had surveyed the town, made the first map of it, walked on its location when it was empty prairie; and posters announcing that the Hon. Abraham Lincoln would discuss issues of the day at a Republican campaign meeting had been torn down, put up again, and once more torn down. The little Republican committee that escorted him from the Springfield stagecoach to the platform in front of the Menard House were lost amid the swarming Democrats; rushes were made toward a banner reading, "Free Speech, Free Soil, Free Kansas, and Frémont."

At last Lincoln and the little committee managed to squeeze their way up on the platform while the crowd hooted, called boo and meeow; whistles, tin horns, and cow bells added to the racket. Lincoln had taken off his linen duster, handed his stovepipe hat to a member of the committee, moved to the front of the platform, and stood there without saying a word. The howling and hooting went on; there were cheers for Buchanan, for Fillmore, the Free Soil candidate, curses for Abolitionists.

In the crowd was young Henry Rankin, and he photographed Lincoln in his memory that day, and said later: "Nearly half an hour passed. He stood there all that while motionless as a statue. The only change I noticed was that at times he folded both arms across his chest, then releasing them, one hand clasped the lapel of his coat and the other arm hung by his side, the hand of that opening and then clutching. These were the only movements of Lincoln visible to those who stood close by. Then a partial lull came, and he began in his lowest outdoor voice to address the assembly. Gradually the tumult near him grew less, then a desire to know what he was saying changed to shouts of 'Louder, louder.' He paused a brief moment—turned from right to left in a masterful glance over the excited people around

the platform—and then raised his long left arm above his head, moving slowly his large hand up and down, as if for the first time asking silence." In less than half an hour the muttering and the chatter had died down; he spoke for two hours.

And young Rankin explained part of the situation there that day by saying: "The clergy of Petersburg and vicinity were nearly all from the South, and strong advocates of the alleged Biblical authority for slavery. Lincoln had met most of them while living in Salem, or at court terms in Petersburg. They were all present that day, and in the latter part of his speech, Lincoln addressed his remarks directly to them. "We will suppose the Reverend Dr. Ross has a slave named Sambo, and the question is: 'Is it the will of God that Sambo shall remain a slave, or be set free?' The Almighty gives no audible answer to the question, and His revelation, the Bible, gives none—or, at most, none but such as admits of a squabble as to its meaning. No one thinks of asking Sambo's opinion on it. So at last it comes to this—that Dr. Ross is to decide the question; and while he considers it, he sits in the shade, with gloves on his hands, and subsists on the bread that Sambo is earning in the burning sun. If he decides that God wills Sambo to be free, he thereby has to walk out of the shade, throw off his gloves, and delve for his bread. Will Dr. Ross be actuated by the most perfect impartiality which has ever been considered most favorable to a correct decision?"

Then from a voice of easy, familiar talk he changed to a high moving wail and cried: "When I see strong hands sowing, reaping, and threshing wheat into bread, I cannot refrain from wishing and believing that those hands, some way, in God's good time, shall own the mouth they feed!"

The gold of October leaves was on the trees; the tawny glow of autumn harvest time was on the air. He had come and he had spoken; he had known well as he rode along the Sangamon River that morning, as the stagecoach turned at the lovely curve of the stream at Salem and he saw yellow slopes his feet had often wandered over—he had known well he would not change

the mind and feeling of Menard County people for that year; what he was counting on was a later time.

Back in his Springfield law office he said to his law partner: "Billy, I never felt so full of just what a crowd ought to hear, and never had a crowd more competent, from the common-sense standpoint, if I could just get them still for half an hour as an entering wedge. I gave them my best. I dropped some things among voters in Menard that will stay. I soaked that crowd full of political facts they can't get away from."

Chapter 105

THAT year of 1856 saw bonfires for the new Republican party of Illinois; they had hitched together a combination of Abolitionists led by Lovejoy, old-line Whigs led by Lincoln, Yates, and others, bolting Democrats led by Palmer, Judd, and others. And in November they found they had put in their man for governor, and taken away from the Democrats all the state offices. The presidential electors and the legislature were held by the Democrats. The Republicans took over the Statehouse; Bill Herndon was appointed bank examiner; Lincoln had a desk in a quiet corner for writing letters when he pleased.

Lincoln spoke at a Republican banquet in Chicago in December and pointed at the national election just past in which the President was elected by no majority at all. "Those who voted for Buchanan," he said, "are in a minority of the whole people by about four hundred thousand votes—one full tenth of all the votes." He raised the point, "The majority may not choose to remain permanently rebuked by that minority." He urged the Free Soil party men to let their organization go and stand with the Republicans. "The human heart is with us; God is with us," he said as he closed, asking for a renewal of the declaration that "all men are created equal."

It was a campaign during which Lincoln's old Georgia friend, Stephens, wrote a letter saying, "I understand that the Republi-

cans have spent $500,000 on Pennsylvania," and the *New York Times* and the *Evening Post* reported that $150,000.00 was sent into Pennsylvania from the slaveholding states; that August Belmont of New York had contributed $50,000.00; and that other Wall Street bankers and brokers, afraid of the rumblings of disunion, disorder, and damage to business from disunion, raised still another hundred thousand dollars.

"Very nearly $500,000" was spent by the Democrats, the *New York Times* estimated, while the Republican expenses were somewhat less. Facts enough were published and generally known to show that moving behind the political contest in Pennsylvania were business and property interests to which a victory in that state was worth money.

Five months after the people had by their ballots spoken more decisively than ever before against slavery extension into new territory, with a majority of 400,000 votes against slavery extension, there came from the Supreme Court at Washington a decision that Congress did not have power to prohibit slavery in the Territories; a slave was property and if a slave owner took that property into a Territory, where the United States Constitution was the high law, the law of that Territory could not take away from him his property.

A defense of this decision was made by Senator Douglas in a speech in Springfield in June; he said: "The courts are tribunals prescribed by the Constitution and created by the authority of the people to determine, expound, and enforce the law. Hence, whoever resists the final decision of the highest judical tribunal aims a deadly blow at our whole republican system of government."

Lincoln replied, first quoting from a message of President Jackson disregarding a Supreme Court bank decision. "Again and again," said Lincoln, "have I heard Judge Douglas denounce that bank decision and applaud General Jackson for disregarding it."

And, having eaten many meals with judges and having slept in the same hotel bedrooms with judges, and having himself

on a few occasions sat on the bench by appointment during the absence of a judge for a day or two, Lincoln ventured to say, "Judicial decisions are of greater or less authority as precedents according to circumstances. That this should be so accords both with common sense and the customary understanding of the legal profession."

He pointed to the fact that the Supreme Court had often overruled its own decisions, and said, "We shall do what we can to have it overrule this."

Then he went into the history of court decisions and state laws regulating slaves. It had not been so far back that state legislatures had the unquestioned power to abolish slavery. "Now it is becoming quite fashionable to withhold that power."

There had been days when the Declaration of Independence was held sacred. "But now, to aid in making the bondage of the negro universal and eternal, it is assailed and sneered at and construed, and hawked at and torn, till, if its framers could rise from their graves, they could not at all recognize it."

As to the slave, and the operation of law, civilization, the schools, colleges, churches, fine arts and men of learning and women of culture, and their ways of thought and action toward the slave, Lincoln delivered himself of a swift and terrible verbal cartoon, a sardonically sketched poem.

Of the chattel slave, he said: "All the powers of earth seem rapidly combining against him. Mammon is after him, ambition follows, philosophy follows, and the theology of the day is fast joining the cry. They have him in his prison house; they have searched his person, and left no prying instrument with him. One after another they have closed the heavy iron doors upon him; and now they have him, as it were, bolted in with a lock of a hundred keys, which can never be unlocked without the concurrence of every key—the keys in the hands of a hundred different men, and they scattered to a hundred different and distant places; and they stand musing as to what invention, in all the dominions of mind and matter, can be produced to make the impossibility of his escape more complete than it is."

From this he advanced to challenge Judge Douglas's argument that Republicans who insisted that the Declaration of Independence included all, black as well as white men, were so insisting "only because they want to vote, and eat, and sleep, and marry with negroes!"

And he mixed logic and human passion in declaring: "I protest against the counterfeit logic which concludes that, because I do not want a black woman for a slave, I must necessarily want her for a wife. I need not have her for either. I can just leave her alone. In some respects she certainly is not my equal; but in her natural right to eat the bread she earns with her own hands without asking leave of any one else, she is my equal, and the equal of all others."

Did the men who wrote the Declaration of Independence mean to say that all men are equal in all respects, equal in color, size, intellect, moral development, social capacity? No, hardly that. Then what did they mean? "They meant to set up a standard maxim for free society, which should be familiar to all and revered by all. The assertion that 'all men are created equal' was of no practical use in effecting our separation from Great Britain; and it was placed in the Declaration, not for that, but for future use. Its authors meant it to be—as, thank God, it is now proving itself—a stumbling-block to those who in after times might seek to turn a free people back into the hateful paths of despotism. They knew the proneness of prosperity to breed tyrants, and they meant when such should reappear in this fair land and commence their vocation, they should find left for them at least one hard nut to crack."

He took up Judge Douglas's argument that the Declaration of Independence referred to the white race alone, in which Douglas said: "When they declared all men to have been created equal, they were speaking of British subjects on this continent being equal to British subjects born and residing in Great Britain; the Declaration was adopted for the purpose of justifying the colonists in the eyes of the civilized world in withdrawing their allegiance from the British crown."

To which Lincoln replied, "Why, according to this, not only negroes but white people outside of Great Britain and America were not spoken of in that instrument. The English, Irish, and Scotch, along with white Americans, were included, to be sure, but the French, Germans, and other white people of the world are all gone to pot along with the judge's inferior races! I had thought the Declaration promised something better than the condition of British subjects; but no, it only meant that we should be equal to them in their own oppressed and unequal condition. According to that, it gave no promise that, having kicked off the king and lords of Great Britain, we should not at once be saddled with a king and lords of our own."

And he came to the matter of Judge Douglas being horrified at the mixing of blood by the white and black races. He too would be horrified. "Agreed for once—a thousand times agreed. There are white men enough to marry all the white women, and black men enough to marry all the black women; and so let them be married."

But—he wished to note there were 405,751 mulattoes in the United States in 1850. "Nearly all have sprung from black slaves and white masters."

He quoted statistics, and argued that the Supreme Court by its decision in degrading black people was promoting race amalgamation. "Could we have had our way, the chances of these black girls ever mixing their blood with that of white people would have been diminished at least to the extent that it could not have been without their consent. But Judge Douglas is delighted to have them decided to be slaves, and not human enough to have a hearing, even if they were free, and thus left subject to the forced concubinage of their masters, and liable to become the mothers of mulattoes in spite of themselves; the very state of case that produces nine-tenths of all the mulattoes—all the mixing of blood in the nation."

The speech had leaps of ironic humor; it laid the blame for slavery on the love of money, and closed: "The plainest print cannot be read through a gold eagle; and it will be ever hard

to find many men who will send a slave to Liberia, and pay his passage, while they can send him to a new country—Kansas, for instance—and sell him for fifteen hundred dollars, and the rise."

And because Illinois and the Northwest and Lincoln were becoming more important nationally, the *New York Times* printed the speech in full.

Chapter 106

LINCOLN had become known as one of the active, practical politicians of central and southern Illinois. "I was dabbling in politics, and of course neglecting business," he wrote as an excuse to one client.

He was a party man; the other wheel horses knew him. He kept in close touch with the machinery of the party organization, often holding conferences and exchanging information and advice with other party leaders in the country and state. Caucuses in his own ward, city, county, and congressional district, for the election of delegates to conventions, were watched over by him. He spent hours many a day figuring, tabulating and estimating as to ballots, candidates, tickets.

He was a veteran of politics, familiar with the devices, traps, exploits. He had seen voting by word of mouth at the polls change to marking ballots with a pencil or pen and ink. He had a speaking acquaintance with hundreds of precinct and county workers who were ready for places as doorkeepers, postmasters, marshals, and deputies, if victory perched on the banners.

Months or years before the nomination of a certain candidate, Lincoln would have cast an eye over the particular man named, and sized him up as to whether he was the one who ought to run for that office. He didn't have time, of course, for detailed canvassing and electioneering in local campaigns. But the men who did the work usually looked him up, talked things over, and got his pointers on the lay of the land.

North Side of Square, Springfield, Illinois.

Newspaper print, 1858.

Outside of the right and wrong of any issues of justice and humanity in politics, Lincoln enjoyed it as a game. It had some of the skill of billiards, the science of arithmetic, and the hazards of horse racing in it. The foremost national sport was politics and he was at home in the smoke, noise, and hullabaloo of it. The big angles of the game were all the more fascinating to him because he had mastered the little essential details, such, for instance, as electioneering.

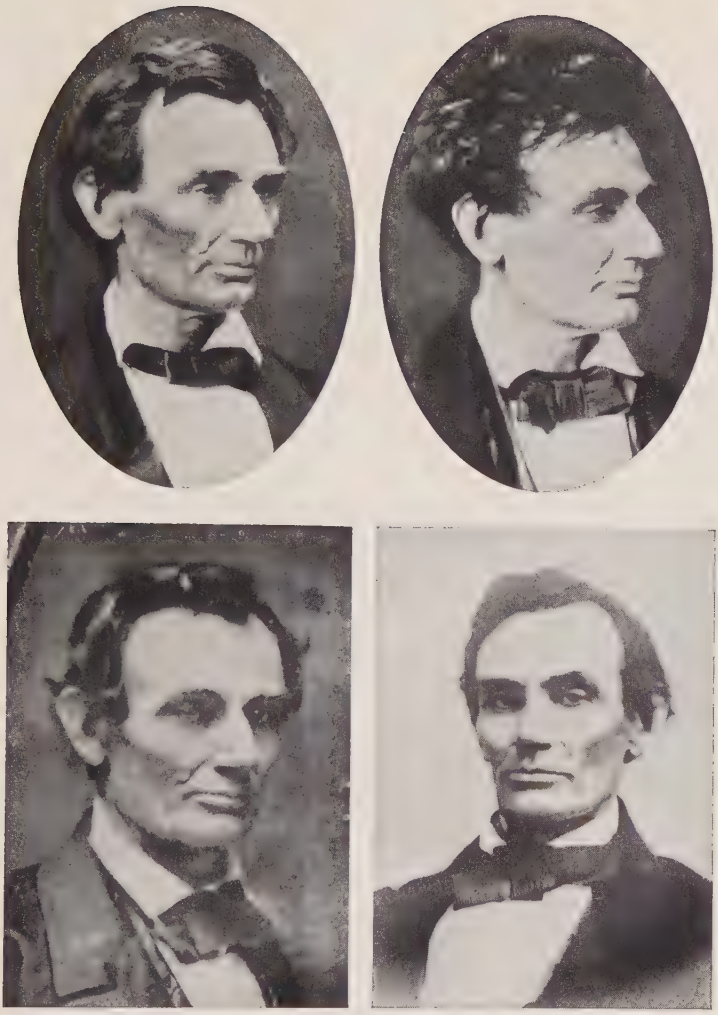
"Things look reasonably well," he would write to a party worker. "If life and health continue I shall pretty likely be in Augusta on the 25th." He wrote hundreds of letters somewhat on the order of one informing Sydney Spring in Graysville: "There was no opening to nominate him (Mr. Farel) for Superintendent of Public Instruction, but through him Egypt made a most valuable contribution to the convention. I think it may be freely said that he came off the lion of the day—or rather of the night. Can you not elect him to the legislature? It seems to me he would be hard to beat. What objection could be made to him? What is your Senator Martin saying and doing? What is Webb about? Please write me."

Though not a Mason, he had at hand a personal copy of the bound "Proceedings of the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the State of Illinois," being reports of conventions of the Masonic order for the years 1851-1857.

He gave his ears to the whisperers of political gossip, seeking straws showing the wind; he wrote to an important man of "a story being whispered about here," saying, "I do not believe the story but still it gives me some uneasiness," and then instead of writing bluntly, "I would never have thought it of you," he penned the diplomatic sentence, "It was not in character with you as I have always estimated you."

Having sent ten dollars to Editor Mosely of the *Prairie Beacon*, he later mailed a political article to that editor, who refused to print it, and Lincoln laughed to Herndon that Mosely was "a real editor."

He met the Bunn brothers one day—Jacob the banker, and



Lincoln faces of 1858 and 1860.

Upper right photograph from Oliver R. Barrett Collection
Other photographs from Frederick H. Meserve Collection

The Lincoln family lived eighteen years in this house at Eighth and Jackson Streets, Springfield, Illinois. Lincoln's own room is in the second storey corner, at the left.

Photograph from Frederick H. Meserve Collection

Looking along Washington Street, Springfield, Illinois.

Print owned by Joseph Husband

John W., the wholesale and retail grocer—and asked John if he didn't wish to run for city treasurer. "John will run if you want him to," said Jacob. Time went by and John almost believed his nomination was forgotten. But at the close of the convention that named the ticket, Bunn saw a young lawyer, picked by Lincoln, rise and present his name, saying: "If there is any delegate on this floor opposed to the candidacy of Mr. Bunn, I do not wish his name to be voted upon or to go on the ticket." And Bunn was nominated, his name was printed on the ticket, and the next morning, going to his grocery store, he caught up with Lincoln, who asked, "How are you running?"

Then, as Bunn himself said afterward: "I told Lincoln I didn't know how I was running. Then he said, 'Have you asked anybody to vote for you?' I said I had not. 'Well,' said he, 'if you don't think enough of your success to ask anybody to vote for you, it is probable they will not do it, and that you will not be elected.' I said to him, 'Shall I ask Democrats to vote for me?' He said, 'Yes, ask everybody to vote for you.'

"Just then a well-known Democrat by the name of Ragsdale was coming up the sidewalk. Lincoln said, 'Now, you drop back there and ask Mr. Ragsdale to vote for you.' I turned and fell in with Mr. Ragsdale, told him of my candidacy, and said I hoped he would support me. To my astonishment, he promised me that he would. Mr. Lincoln walked slowly along and fell in with me again, and said: 'Well, what did Ragsdale say? Will he vote for you?' I said, 'Yes, he told me he would.' 'Well, then,' said Lincoln, 'you are sure of two votes at the election, mine and Ragsdale's.' It was my first lesson in practical politics."

If Lincoln telegraphed a friend at Alton, "Bring Joe Gillespie here immediately, don't fail," there was a scurrying in that quarter to get hold of Joe and send him on to Lincoln. He could write a letter brimming over with encouragement and hope, and full of details as to how to tackle the troubles at hand. "I do hope you are worse scared than hurt," he wrote to Gillespie, telling him, "Run down one of the poll books of the Edwardsville

precinct, and take the first hundred known American names, then quietly ascertain how many of them are going to vote for Douglas. I think you will find less than fifty—but even if you find fifty, make sure of the other fifty, that is, make sure of all you can at all events."

Starting to drive Lincoln to Greenville, Gillespie said they could only go as far as Highland that evening. "He seemed delighted with the idea of stopping at Highland, as he said he had understood that place was a little Germany. We stopped there and had a good time; the house where we were stopping was crowded and jammed. I here got the first inkling of the popularity of Lincoln among the Germans. The people at Highland were enraptured." Thus wrote Gillespie.

Lincoln stayed in good standing as a member of the Illinois State Colonization Society, being included among the officers in 1857, when the *Springfield Journal* listed O. H. Browning as president, assisted by ten vice presidents, two secretaries of the treasury, and a board of managers having as its members: Rev. J. H. Brown, D.D., Rev. S. W. Harkey, D.D., Rev. J. W. Pierson, Rev. C. W. Sears, Rev. N. W. Miner, Rev. A. Hale, William Yates, Esq., J. S. Vredenberg, Hon. S. M. Cullom, Hon. A. Lincoln.

Chapter 107

A NIGHT sky of stars over the prairie has the same march and countermarch of mystery as a night sky of stars over the sea.

Across the prairie sky in the year 1858 there came in Illinois cloudy weather for a long time and when it cleared there was seen on the blue mist sheeting of the sky a traveling tail of fire, a new silver arrow among the old yellow stars.

The people had known it was coming; the men of the books had said it would come; a man named Donati in far-off Italy had seen this tail of fire through a telescope and it had been named Donati's comet; at least two and perhaps three thousand

years this silver arrow had been tracking its way, a wanderer, not at all responsible in the way that fixed stars and the sun and the moon are responsible, a mover and a goer into new and unknown ways.

It was in this year of the comet that Lincoln was fixing his thoughts on the fact that nothing stays fixed. Up among the fixed stars and steady constellations are explosions and offshoots of comets, sprays of comets. Even in the mathematics of the stars one had to say, "If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do, and how to do it."

For Lincoln, the year of the comet was one filled with burning struggle. As in other years for him, it was in silence and apart from the eyes of other men that he grew, learned, held to his secrets, shaped his personality and purpose, kept to his resolve that the plan of his life should curve "quietly, as the orbit of the earth."

In the spring of the year he was writing notes for a speech; at the state gathering of Republicans in June they were going to nominate him for United States senator from Illinois; and he was going to make a speech; he was to tell the world what Illinois and the Northwest would stand for. As he read the speech to Herndon in their office, it lighted Herndon into saying, "Lincoln, deliver that speech as read, and it will make you President."

Lincoln had spoken the high points of it at Bloomington during the last campaign, and a Chicago judge and a Galena congressman had warned him never to be so radical again. In the State Library in Springfield he sat in a chair and read it off to a picked dozen of political friends; they said it was too radical; it was "a fool utterance"; it was "ahead of its time"; it would drive away votes; all were against his delivering the first paragraph of the speech, except Herndon. And Lincoln was polite and decent—and couldn't see where he ought to change the speech.

The convention met in Springfield on June 17, named Lincoln for United States senator, and then sent out for him to come and

make a speech. He came, bowed to the applause and cheers, murmured, "Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Convention," and then, for the first time in his life reading a speech from a manuscript, he began:

"If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do, and how to do it. We are now far into the fifth year since a policy was initiated with the avowed object and confident promise of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy, that agitation has not only not ceased, but has constantly augmented. In my opinion, it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. 'A house divided against itself cannot stand.' I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other."

This was so plain that any two farmers fixing fences on a rainy morning could talk it over in all its ins and outs. And to this was added a sentence for all the more thoughtful to follow in all its exact and terrible meanings. The speaker read:

"Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South."

In simple Bible language, in words as short as those of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," and in longer words of piercing precision, he had spoken thought as fresh, beautiful, and terrible as Donati's comet with its tail of fire in the sky. What he had said was easy to say and to understand, a common-sense telling of what millions of anxious hearts wanted told.

There was more to the speech; he put together this and that circumstance and argued that while on the face of them the people could not be sure that there was a conspiracy on foot to nationalize slavery, yet explanations were required as to why

the two Presidents, Franklin Pierce and James Buchanan, a Supreme Court Chief Justice, and the United States senator, Stephen A. Douglas, had all taken parts in moves and acts that seemed to lead straight toward a time when slaves could be owned and worked in all states of the Union. And he mentioned how the Republican party, of strange, discordant, and even hostile elements, "gathered from the four winds," had fought winning battles in the last campaign and with wise counsels should go on.

He struck at the Supreme Court as a dynasty. "Put this and that together, and we have another nice little niche, which we may, ere long, see filled with another Supreme Court decision declaring that the Constitution of the United States does not permit a State to exclude slavery from its limits. Such a decision is all that slavery now lacks of being alike lawful in all the States. Welcome or unwelcome, such decision is probably coming, and will soon be upon us, unless the power of the present political dynasty shall be met and overthrown. We shall lie down pleasantly dreaming that the people of Missouri are on the verge of making their State free, and we shall awake to the reality instead that the Supreme Court has made Illinois a slave State. To meet and overthrow the power of that dynasty is the work now before all those who would prevent that consummation."

There was more to the speech—but the part that interested the country, as daily and weekly newspapers published the speech in full, was its opening paragraph. It became known as the "House Divided" speech.

Chapter 108

LINCOLN was charging conspiracy but not using the word conspiracy. He was saying that the President of the United States, the executive department of the Government, and the Supreme Court, the judicial department, were putting their heads together

and whispering things not known at all to the country and the people, working secretly on a plan that would be beaten if worked out openly and publicly.

The Supreme Court decision or dictum in the Dred Scott case was framed by a secret arrangement between Stephen A. Douglas, the Illinois Democratic senator, Franklin Pierce, the former Democratic President, Roger B. Taney, the Democratic Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and James Buchanan, the Democratic President succeeding Pierce.

"We find it impossible," said Lincoln, "not to believe that Stephen and Franklin and Roger and James all understood one another from the beginning, and all worked upon a common plan or draft."

Lincoln did not know that Justice Catron, on February 19, 1857, wrote to President Buchanan, saying, "My Dear Sir: The Dred Scott case has been before the Judges several times since last Saturday, and I think you may safely say in your Inaugural," following then with a draft of a paragraph which Justice Catron believed would be suitable for the inaugural, and closing the letter with a suggestion that Buchanan should "drop Grier a line, saying how necessary it is." Grier was another Supreme Court justice. "He has no doubt about the question on the main contest," wrote Catron to the incoming President, "but has been persuaded to take the smooth handle for the sake of repose."

Nor did Lincoln know that four days later Justice Grier wrote to Buchanan, the President to be inaugurated in nine days, saying, "In conversation with the Chief Justice I have agreed to concur with him," and ending the letter, "We will not let any others of our brethren know anything about our anxiety, and though contrary to our usual practice, we have thought due to you to state to you in candor and confidence the real state of the matter."

Such were a few of the secret actions operating back of the Dred Scott dictum, and pointed to as probable, and believable, by Lincoln in his homely and almost friendly declaration, "We

find it impossible not to believe that Stephen and Franklin and Roger and James all understood one another from the beginning, and all worked upon a common plan or draft."

The names of agitator and blatherskite were hurled at Lincoln by Democratic newspapers, for his House Divided speech, in which he first presented this view. Political friends growled that he had been radical, gone too far. And he said: "If I had to draw a pen across my record and erase my whole life from sight, and I had one poor gift or choice left as to what I should save from the wreck, I should choose that speech and leave it to the world unerased."

Chapter 109

At the time the House Divided speech went out over America to its readers, there was peculiar appeal about Lincoln's saying, "If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do, and how to do it." The country was still staggering under the panic of the year before with its bank wrecks, tumbling stocks, and property value shrinkages.

Forty thousand workmen out of jobs had marched the streets of New York and planted at the City Hall doors banners reading "Hunger Is a Sharp Thorn" and "We Want Work." Agitators and crowds at street meetings had threatened to raid the banks in Wall Street and the subtreasury vaults holding $20,000,000 of gold and silver coin; squads of fifty soldiers and fifty marines had been detailed to guard the Government cash reserves. In Chicago 20,000 men had been out of jobs during the winter; the city council reduced the wages of street cleaners from seventy-five to fifty cents a day so the city money could be spread to larger numbers of hungry families.

Little Alexander Stephens, with his luminous black eyes, had stood up in Congress and made the claim that whatever might be said of slavery there was no unemployment and no hunger among the negro field hands of the South. And white mechanics

in Georgia joined with white mechanics of Virginia in the declaration that black men must be kept out of foundries, machine shops and skilled trades, or there would follow a degradation of white workingmen. At least ten thousand negroes per year were being smuggled direct from the African jungles and sold in the United States.

Though there were banners of hunger in the cities that winter there were farms on the western prairies thick with the fat of the land. Judge Dean Caton of Chicago, known as "the telegraph king," noted of his friends Strawn, Funk, Brown, Morrison, and others: "Their cornfields cover whole prairies, stretch away farther than the human eye can reach, and their countless herds rival those of the mountain Kirghis and Khans of the great nomadic tribes who roamed the vast steppes of northern Asia. They conceived and developed plans corresponding in magnitude to the great country in whose wild luxuriance they found themselves, accomplishing results rarely equaled, and amassing wealth never before known in so short a time, in purely agricultural pursuits. They enjoy their wealth in large and commodious double log-houses in which they despise tinsel glitter. Their ambition of display is in field and flocks and herds."

Side by side with the growing industrial civilization of the cities there was an agricultural civilization rising on the northwest prairies. Stock raisers such as Isaac Funk of Bloomington were going down into Missouri and Texas, even across the Mexican border, to buy cattle to feed; one Funk herd of 1,400 cattle averaged 700 pounds in weight and cost $64,000; there were farms of 7,000 acres, of 10,000, one of 27,000 acres. Michael Sullivant had 80,000 acres in Champaign, Livingston, and Ford counties; it was six miles from his house to that of the nearest neighbor who was not a tenant on his land; he bought his McCormick reapers in lots of fifty at a time; his corncribs if joined and put in a single line would have stretched miles. Solomon Sturges had bought in central Illinois a total of 100,000 acres at a dollar an acre. Improved farm land in Illinois mounted in ten years from five to thirteen million acres. The value of

machinery used by farmers mounted from six to seventeen million dollars in ten years. The yearly harvest wagons and corncribs hauled a hundred million bushels where ten years back the haul was half that amount.

And while across the midwest prairies and the small sections of the Great Plains that had been opened up, there was going on a development of big and little farms, and of towns springing up along the railroad lines, there was besides this agricultural growth an industrial and transportation civilization trying to break through into a bigger territory of operation and exploitation.

The determination and the anxiety of men, or of economic forces and necessities pushing men on, seemed almost to say: "We are going to have a railroad across America, from coast to coast; the iron ways now running from the Atlantic seaboard to the Mississippi are going to cross the Great Plains, the Rocky Mountains, the Great American Desert, and the Sierra ridges; the cargoes of box cars loaded on the east coast are going to be transferred overland by rail routes to the west coast; unless this is done the incalculable and immeasurable riches of the plains, mountains, and valleys of the West beyond the Mississippi will never be tapped and taken and turned into personal fortunes and national wealth. For us, railroads spell civilization and progress."

North and South, men felt the necessity for a railroad to the Pacific. Charles A. Dana wrote in the *New York Tribune* how such a route would be the best means of controlling the trade of India, China, and other oriental markets. Jefferson Davis, as Secretary of War from 1852 to 1856, had put through a monumental job in getting Government publication of a ten-volume set of books under the official title, "Reports of Explorations and Surveys to Ascertain the Most Practicable and Economical Route for a Railroad from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean." Botanists such as the famous Asa Gray, and the most competent geologists, mineralogists, and experts and scientists made exhaustive and detailed studies of the lay of the land, its

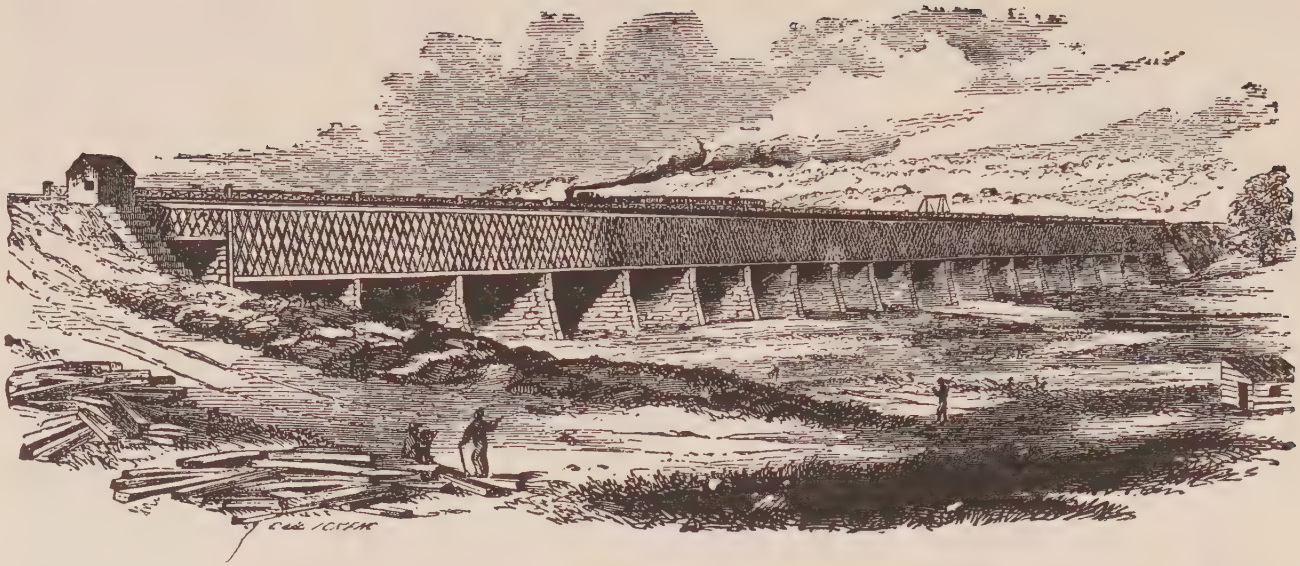
Chicago and Rock Island Railroad train, and bridge over Rock River in northwestern Illinois. Commerce wants this train to run on to the west coast instead of stopping at the Mississippi River. Politics is stopping the iron horse from crossing the Great Plains and the Rockies. Transportation to connect the two coasts is an immense underlying national issue of the late '50s.

From a print loaned by Joseph Husband.

soil, grasses, vegetables, fruits, rocks, minerals, timber, weather. Maps, color illustrations, and tables of figures accompanied the report. It was the first thorough attempt to take away the mystery that attached to what Senator Sumner had called "the vast Mesopotamian region of the West." The first estimated cost of the survey was $150,000.00, which Congress willingly voted; an added deficiency of $40,000.00 was again voted; and once more $150,000.00 had to be authorized by Congress; so that items of $340,000.00 were paid out for the purpose of educating the country on the physical facts of the Far West.

Three routes to the Pacific were discussed, a northern one across Nebraska and Utah, a middle one across Missouri, Kansas, and along the Santa Fe Trail; and a southern one across Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. The ten-volume report directed by Jefferson Davis favored the southern route. To build the line from Fort Smith, Arkansas, to the Pacific Ocean, it was estimated, would cost $162,000,000, or about $90,000 a mile. Davis favored the Government's undertaking this work by reason of "military necessity," and then, in exchange for bonds and land grants, turning over the railroad built to private management. But, North and South, there was no faith in Government handling of construction work and internal improvements. For more than twenty-five years the Government had blundered along, building a macadamized road from Cumberland, Maryland, to Jefferson City, Missouri. The question was asked, "If the Government was unable to make 300 miles of turnpike road in 25 years, how long would it take to construct a railroad to the Pacific Ocean?"

The New York senator, Seward, was telling the country in April of 1858 that unless railroad and telegraph connected the two coasts, the Pacific states could not be held in the Union. "The Pacific possessions loom up with a rapidity that our history, or the history of the world, does not equal. They must be our equals or not of us. Every day the railroad is delayed is a day of danger to the United States." Eleven state legislatures had voted almost unanimously for Asa Whitney's project that would



Viaduct on the Illinois Central Railroad, at La Salle, Illinois. In the ten years between 1850 and 1860 the little stub-line railroads of the East and West are connected and merged into trunk-line systems tying the East to the Northwest in commercial and transportation unity that is bringing terrific political shake-ups. As the Northwest gets railroads and improved farm machinery, the prairies fill up with settlers whose political action is breaking a thirty-year hold of the South on the Washington government.

grant thirty miles of land on each side of a proposed railroad line to its builders. Senator Benton had said a statue of Columbus should be "hewn from the granite mass of a peak of the Rocky Mountains, overlooking the road." Senator Butler of South Carolina had complained, "It was said of the Nile that it was a god; this Pacific railroad project comes nearer deification than anything else I ever heard of in the Senate." Senator Sumner of Massachusetts had offered a Fourth of July toast in Boston: "The railroad from the Atlantic to the Pacific—traversing a whole continent and binding together two oceans, this mighty thoroughfare, when completed, will mark an epoch of human progress second only to that of our Declaration of Independence. May the day soon come." Thus earnest, and almost poetic, speech was spilled in behalf of a recognized and vital national necessity. And little or nothing was done. Politics, passions, set up barriers.

At the head and front of northern efforts for a line to the Pacific was Senator Stephen A. Douglas. He was trying to connect the Great Lakes with the Pacific Ocean just as he had connected the Great Lakes with the Gulf of Mexico by means of the Illinois Central and the Mobile & Ohio railroads. He had failed in the latter scheme until he obtained southern political support through changing the bill so that it gave the South land grants as freely as the North. He had again failed to get southern political support for his bill opening up Nebraska and Kansas to territorial settlement and statehood until he let the bill have a rider that repealed the Missouri Compromise.

In his attempts to push national expansion plans Douglas had association with New York and Boston capitalists, including men who directed the conduct of the Panama Railroad and the Pacific Mail Steamship Company; they were a group who controlled not only a monopoly of transportation across the Isthmus of Panama, but also the monopoly of through transportation from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico by means of their railroads, the Illinois Central and the Mobile & Ohio. Aspinwall, Robert Schuyler, president of the New York Central Railroad,

and Thomas Ludlow, president of the Panama Railroad, were all Democrats, and their enterprises had obtained Government support on a large scale.

When Douglas spoke to the Senate on April 17, 1858, on the three different routes proposed for a railroad to the Pacific Ocean, he spoke as a patriot who wished to see America an ocean-bound republic, and he spoke also as a friend of the men who controlled rail transportation across the Isthmus of Panama, as well as the iron ways from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. He said that either the northern route or the middle route to the Pacific would satisfy him as a northern man, as a man living at the centre of the continent, "the great heart and centre of the Republic, the Mississippi Valley, the point at which it is to diverge." The northern route, he had sometimes thought, furnished better grass, more timber, more water, more of the elements for construction, repair, and maintenance of a railroad; yet inasmuch as he expected never to put a dollar of money into the road nor have any agency nor connection with it, he would be willing to take the middle or Albuquerque route, if it were so decided. The cost to the Government, outside of land grants, would be limited to $25,000,000.00.

Douglas told the Senate, "I am unwilling to lose this great measure merely because of a difference of opinion as to what shall be the pass selected in the Rocky Mountains through which the road shall run. I believe it is a great national measure. I believe it is the greatest practical measure now pending before the country. I believe that we have arrived at that period in our history when our great substantial interests require it. The interests of commerce, the great interests of travel and communication—those still greater interests that bind the Union together, and are to make and preserve the continent as one and indivisible —all demand that this road shall be commenced, prosecuted, and completed at the earliest practicable moment. I am unwilling to postpone the bill. I have seen these postponements from session to session for the last eight or ten years."

Douglas compared the trade of the West Indies with that

of the East Indies. "Cuba, Central America, and all the islands surrounding them put together, are not a thousandth part of the value of the great East India trade that would be drawn first to our western coast, and then across to the Valley of the Mississippi, if this railroad be constructed. Sir, if we intend to extend our commerce, if we intend to make the great ports of the world tributary to our wealth, we must penetrate the Pacific, its islands, and its continent, where the great mass of the human family reside—where the articles that have built up the powerful nations of the world have always come from."

The railroad and traffic problem of the country, the land question, and free homestead development, were woven in and tied through with the more open issue of slavery. The economic resources of the North were beginning to tower overwhelmingly over the South. It was happening again and again that an economic issue, based on natural, healthy growth of the country, was buried and covered over by the raging passions and prejudices of the supreme political, social, and economic issue of slavery. In the North the Abolitionist crusaders had money, sentiment, and dramatic events enabling them to command a power they had not approached in former years. In the South, legal statutes and social customs clamped a tight lid on all discussion of slavery as wrong.

So, again the building of a railroad to the Pacific was postponed. President Buchanan and the powerful southern planters were more interested in breaking Douglas and driving him out of politics because he refused to vote for a slave-state constitution for Kansas, and had split the Democratic party with his claims and evidence that the Kansas election was a fraud.

Already it was believed there would be three candidates for President in 1860; two Democratic parties and the Republican party; and the winner would be the man who could carry the Northwest. Either that, or the election would be so close that it would be thrown into Congress.

And when in June it happened that Douglas read the House Divided speech of Abraham Lincoln, he saw that it was im-

portant. He studied every thought and phase of thought in it, every word and turn of phrase in it. He would refer to it and argue it down in nearly every campaign speech he would deliver.

It was a speech in which Lincoln had employed the rule involved in his answer to a question from the court crier in Springfield, one T. W. S. Kidd, who asked what special ability was most valuable for a winning politician. Lincoln answered, "To be able to raise a cause which shall produce an effect, and then fight the effect."

Chapter 110

HORACE GREELEY, the pink-faced, benevolent, farmer-looking editor of the *New York Tribune,* had five thousand Republican subscribers out in Illinois. The New York editor was saying Illinois Republicans should put up no candidate against Douglas for senator at the coming election. And Lincoln didn't like it that the *Tribune,* a Republican paper, should keep on praising Douglas for breaking with President Buchanan and splitting the Democratic party. Some Republicans believed Greeley was ready to push Douglas as the Republican candidate for President in 1860. Herndon had written a warning East: "Douglas is this day Republican in heart and head, though not from honest, deep, manly convictions; he is so because power lies there, in the North, and where power is, *there is the political buzzard.*"

And Lincoln had written to Senator Trumbull: "What does the *New York Tribune* mean by its constant eulogising, and admiring, and magnifying Douglas? Does it, in this, speak the sentiments of the Republicans at Washington? Have they concluded that the Republican cause, generally, can be best promoted by sacrificing us here in Illinois? If so, we would like to know it soon; it will save us a great deal of labor to surrender at once."

And then Herndon, against Lincoln's advice, had packed a valise and started for Washington, first writing the Boston min-

ister, Parker, "I want to see Douglas's face; I want to look him in the eye. I think I know what he is as well as any man, having seen him enough in all conditions and states."

Having been drunk with Douglas and also having known Douglas sober, Herndon wanted to look him in the eye and talk; then he would know whether Douglas was going to try to take over the Republican party of Illinois, as Greeley, Henry Wilson, and other Republican leaders were urging him to do. "There is a peculiar tie which binds men together who have drunk bouts together," Herndon wrote Parker, who replied, "There is a freemasonry in drinking."

Shown up to Douglas's room in Washington, Herndon found the famous statesman sitting up in a chair smoking a cigar. Between puffs he told Herndon he wasn't in Lincoln's way, and on parting said, "Give Mr. Lincoln my regards, and tell him I have crossed the river and burned my boat." Which had the same finality as his remark to President Buchanan, "I have bought a through ticket, and checked my baggage."

In New York, Greeley told Herndon plenty; he was for Douglas, talked bitterly against the Illinois newspapers that differed in policy from the *New York Tribune,* and said: "Let the future alone; it will come out all right. Douglas is a brave man. Forget the past and sustain the righteous." Also Greeley dropped the remark, "The Republican standard is too high; we want something practical." Thus the country's most famous and widely read editor counseled the country lawyer from Illinois.

And going on to Massachusetts, Herndon, the country lawyer, met the governor of that state, a Republican, who said, "You will sustain Douglas in Illinois, won't you?" And it was lonesome for Bill Herndon; he felt people were cold in New England —except Theodore Parker, and a few others. He hunted up one man, expecting to find him shriveled, selfish, haughty, and instead shook hands with a man of "warmth, wit, and deep abiding faith." Thus he wrote to Parker after getting back to Springfield. "I was better and more warmly received by him than by any man in Boston; and now whom do you think it

was? It was this nation's greatest outlaw; it was William Lloyd Garrison."

Herndon had brought home for Lincoln a "Life of Edmund Burke," which Lincoln said he couldn't read; it was all eulogy. Among printed lectures and sermons by Theodore Parker, however, Lincoln read more than once a marked sentence, "Democracy is self-government, over all the people, for all the people, by all the people." It was a little like a sentence of his own twelve years before in a letter to Samuel J. May, wherein he referred to "government of all, by all, for all."

A many-sided Bill Herndon was this law partner of Lincoln. To him Lincoln would say, while stretched out on a lounge, "Now tell us what's in the books, Billy." For Herndon was lighted up with books and learning as well as temperament, gloom, lanterns of liberty, banners of freedom. He wrote Parker as to his eastern trip: "In my travels I was sadly disappointed in individual men, but gloriously disappointed in the grandeur of Nature. Individual men seemed to shrink whilst Nature grew. My ideas of Nature and God have deepened and broadened, have become rich and warm in me, and I feel a fresh, vigorous confidence in the eternal love of God for all his creatures, multiform and multitudinous."

And in the same letter he poured out this pitcher of mingled gladness and humility and prayer: "Boston is a great city; it is a world of granite, a city of palaces and squares. I saw in Boston some of the noblest and handsomest women I ever saw; they will save the race, if the men fail. If there is anything that a poor ignorant 'sucker' like myself can arrogate to himself it is this, namely, an intuitive *seeing* of human character. I watched you all closely, and am not deceived. I say that your men are generally cold—probably not more selfish than other men; but they are *cold*. Understand me. I do not say this indiscriminately of all. But your women are spontaneously good, generous, and loving. And now I say, God save you all!"

It was spring; he was glad to be back home. "Our gooseberry bushes are out in full leaf; our lilac is out and blooming; our

tulips are up, and the flower stem is two or three inches high; our people are planting their crops; Nature everywhere looks kindly, fresh, and green, inviting its lovers to 'promenade all,' and dance a universal waltz."

And while the peace of sunlit lilacs kissed the springtime air in Illinois, Lincoln sat and read a book that Herndon had brought from Boston, a book that other thousands of thoughtful men over the country were reading, a sad and terrible book, a book with the wailing of a Jeremiah in its pages, a book with a low and vague storm growling in its breath. It was entitled "The Impending Crisis of the South."

The writer was Hinton Rowan Helper, who came from a slaveholding family that had lived a hundred years in the Carolinas, and he dedicated his book "to the non-slaveholding whites of the South." He marshaled against slavery such witnesses as Mansfield, Locke, Pitt, Shakespeare, Cowper, Milton, Blackstone, Coke, Hampton, and Brougham of England, besides Burke and Curran and Beattie, Miller and MacKnight of Scotland, as well as LaFayette, Montesquieu, Louis X, and Rousseau of France, Grotius of Holland, Goethe and Luther of Germany, Cicero and Leo X of Italy, and Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle of Greece. He called up a crowd of ghosts, such as Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Henry, Randolph, Clay, Benton, Marshall, Bolling, Chandler, Birney—of the South—and Franklin, Hamilton, Jay, Adams, Webster, Clinton—of the North. He rested formidable chapters on the testimony of the churches and the status of the Bible as an antislavery textbook. He refused to hope that such appeals could stand by themselves.

Helper declared in italics in his opening chapter, "We can prove, and we shall now proceed to prove, that the annual hay crop of the free states is worth considerably more in dollars and cents than all the cotton, tobacco, rice, hay, hemp, and cane sugar annually produced in the fifteen slave states." Wherewith he offered statistics for 1850 to show the hay crop of the free states was worth $142,138,998 as against a total of $138,005,723, the total value of the cotton crop and the five other crops of the

slave states. He began and ended the book with statistics. He quoted a governor of Virginia as saying: "Instead of having to feed cattle on a thousand hills, you have had to chase the stump-tailed steer through the sedge patches to procure a tough beef-steak. The landlord has skinned the tenant, the tenant has skinned the land, until all have grown poor together."

Helper quoted the Hon. C. C. Clay of Alabama: "I can show you, with sorrow, in the older portions of Alabama, and in my native county of Madison, the sad memorials of the artless and exhausting culture of cotton. Our small planters, after taking the cream off their lands, unable to restore them by rest, manure, or otherwise, are going further West and South, in search of other virgin lands, which they may and will despoil and impoverish in like manner. Our wealthier planters, with greater means and no more skill, are buying out their poorer neighbors, extending their plantations, and adding to their slave force. The wealthy few, who are able to live on smaller profits, and to give their blasted fields some rest, are thus pushing off the many who are merely independent. Of the $20,000,000 annually realized from the sales of the cotton crop in Alabama, nearly all not expended in supporting the producers is reinvested in land and negroes." Thus he massed items of information.

Before writing his book, Helper had talked with hay dealers in Baltimore, and learned that Maryland was buying seven million dollars' worth of hay from the North every year, and one million dollars' worth of cotton from the South. He listed articles the South bought from the North—Bibles, brooms, buckets and books; furniture, crockery, glassware, toys, apparel, medicines, pianos, shoes, hats, handkerchiefs. "We go to the North for them all. Instead of keeping our money in circulation at home, by patronizing our own mechanics, manufacturers, and laborers, we send it all away to the North, and there it remains; it never falls into our hands again."

And if Helper's book had stopped there and not become radical, revolutionary, it probably would have been printed and circulated in the South. But the author quoted the law of

Maryland to show "why this work was not published in Baltimore." The law declared "the writing or printing any pamphlet, newspaper, handbill, or other paper of an inflammatory character, and having a tendency to excite discontent, or stir up insurrection amongst the people of color" to be a felony punishable with two to twenty years in the penitentiary. He commented on the law: "What wonder is it that there is no native literature in the South? The South can never have a literature of her own until after slavery shall have been abolished." He was insolent, scornful. "Slaveholders are too lazy and ignorant to write it, and the non-slaveholders—even the few whose minds are cultivated at all—are not permitted to make the attempt."

On the basis of the census of 1850, he showed that in a population of 6,184,477 in the slave states, only 347,525 were slaveholders. And he cried in reckless bitter accusation, and in writhing grief: "Until we examined into the matter, we thought and hoped the South was ahead of the North in *one* particular, that of agriculture; but our thoughts have been changed, and our hopes frustrated; we behold our dear native South stripped of every laurel, and sinking deeper and deeper in the depths of poverty and shame, while we see the North rising higher and higher in the scale of fame, fortune, and invulnerable power. Our soul, justly we believe, cries out for retribution against the treacherous, slave-driving legislators, who have so basely and unpatriotically neglected the interests of their poor white constituents and bargained away the rights of posterity."

Helper pointed to the white non-slaveholders of the South as in a majority of five to one. "They have never yet had any part or lot in framing the laws under which they live. There is no legislation except for the benefit of slavery, the slaveholders. As a general rule, poor white persons are regarded with less esteem and attention than negroes, and though the condition of the latter is wretched beyond description, vast numbers of the former are infinitely worse off. A cunningly devised mockery of freedom is guaranteed to them, and that is all. To all intents, they are disfranchised, and outlawed."

Unless the rich planters who controlled the South could be overthrown, the South would become to the North as Ireland to England or Poland to Russia, declared Helper's book. "The lords of the lash are not only absolute masters of the blacks, who are bought and sold, and driven about like so many cattle, but they are also the oracles and arbiters of all non-slaveholding whites, whose freedom is merely nominal, and whose unparalleled illiteracy and degradation is purposely and fiendishly perpetuated. How little the 'poor white trash,' the great majority of the Southern people, know of the real condition of the country is, indeed, sadly astonishing. They know what their imperious masters condescend to tell, and that is but precious little, and even that little, always garbled and one-sided, is never told except in public harangues; for the haughty cavaliers of shackles and handcuffs will not degrade themselves by holding private converse with those who have neither dimes nor hereditary rights in human flesh. Whenever it pleases, and to the extent it pleases a slaveholder to become communicative, poor whites may hear with fear and trembling, but not speak. Non-slaveholders are not only kept in ignorance of what is transpiring at the North, but they are continually misinformed of what is going on even in the South. Never were the poorer classes of a people, and those classes so largely in the majority, and all inhabiting the same country, so basely duped, so adroitly swindled, or so damnably outraged."

A sad, violent book it was that Abraham Lincoln read in the spring of 1858, as he was writing notes on his House Divided speech, placing the notes in his hat, taking them out, making his revisions and then putting them back in the tall silk stovepipe. As he read the book he marked passages he couldn't say yes to, such as one, "Out of our effects you have long since overpaid yourselves for your slaves; and now, sirs, you *must* emancipate them, or we will emancipate them for you."

And another he marked as too extreme: "Indeed, it is our honest conviction that all the proslavery slaveholders, who are alone responsible for the continuance of this baneful institution

among us, deserve to be at once reduced to a parallel with the base criminals that lie fettered in the cells of public prisons."

Helper's book was a revolutionary appeal, as reckless and uncompromising in its passion as the speeches of Patrick Henry and Samuel Adams in the days before the American Revolution. Many Republicans, and nearly all the Abolitionists, were giving it the widest possible circulation. Some who disapproved of its violent tone believed it should be widely read because of its statistics and information.

That the book should have been produced, that the non-slaveholders of the South and the poor whites should have found a voice, that so direct and fierce a challenge should be hurled at the rich planters who controlled the South, was a symptom and a sign that Lincoln tried to analyze. Part of his analysis went into his speech so soft, so quiet, beginning, "If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do, and how to do it."

The year was full of large and swift events for Lincoln—the first year in which he was so wrapped up in politics that he didn't have time to file any cases in the Illinois supreme court.

Bill Herndon had written to his Boston friend Parker, "These are curious, mysterious days," and spoken of events hard to read because there were "not facts enough out yet."

Herndon sniffed it in the air that powerful men South, North, West, were suspicious, quarreling, exasperated, desperate. "There will be many foul disclosures in this fight. They will tell each other of treachery—of each other's rascality; they will taunt each other, and the age and freedom will profit by the quarrel. Robbers have fallen out over the distribution of their bloody booty. The quarrel will be long and bitter, wild and ferocious. Let honest men look on, and laugh or weep, as suits their respective natures. I shall mourn, yet rejoice. What is your opinion of things? How do the Massachusetts men look upon this 'squabble'?"

Chapter 111

WHEN the newspapers brought to the eye of Stephen A. Douglas, at his Washington home, the speech of A. Lincoln saying that a house divided against itself cannot stand, the senator was more than interested. When he read that the state Republican convention had with cheers resolved, "That Hon. Abraham Lincoln is our first and only choice for United States Senator to fill the vacancy about to be created by the expiration of Mr. Douglas's term of office," he was again more than interested. He knew that Greeley and the *New York Tribune*, as well as several Republican congressmen, had done their best to leave the Illinois Republican nomination open, so that, if events favored, Douglas could have the support of the Republican party. It interested the senator to see that the Illinois Republican politicians refused to listen to New York and Ohio Republican politicians on how to run their party in Illinois.

Douglas was the leading man at that hour in the great drama of American politics. Against him in his contest for reëlection he had President Buchanan and the national Democratic Administration, besides Lincoln and the young Republican party of Illinois which had two years previously elected a governor and the whole state ticket. He knew that both these forces were out to kill him politically. Yet he shook back the massive pompadour of wavy black hair on his head and his blue eyes lighted as he looked ahead to his contest in Illinois for his political life. Had he not seen four years before how hate and terrible names could come crashing on a public man—because of the Missouri Compromise repeal? And had he not seen the whirligig of politics in a dazzling shift so that later he was hailed as hero and brave man and great statesman? Had he not many times walked boldly into hostile territory and snatched victory out of the face of defeat? Had he not publicly put his voucher on Frederick the Great's slogan, "Take possession first and negotiate afterwards"?

He was an example of success, this Judge Douglas, who as a Vermont Yankee had come to Illinois and earned his first money as an auctioneer, then as a school-teacher, a lawyer, a member of the legislature, a land commissioner, and at twenty-eight years of age a state supreme court judge, at thirty a congressman, at thirty-four a United States senator, at thirty-nine narrowly missing the Democratic nomination for President.

Among his friends Douglas could count some of the most powerful railroad financiers in the country; without his tenacity and shrewdness the rail route from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico would not have been laid so early; it was in the interest of a rail route to the Pacific that he had risked his political life in the Missouri Compromise repeal; the Illinois Central railroad company would be one of his best helpers in his Illinois campaign. He played the game on a national scale; he had sent funds from Illinois to carry Pennsylvania in the last campaign. He had earned the contempt of antislavery leaders; a Massachusetts senator who kept five different English dictionaries had compared him to "the noisome, squat, and nameless animal whose tongue switches a perpetual stench;" he had been called "a Northern man with Southern principles."

His first wife was the daughter of a North Carolina planter; at her home Douglas had seen slavery as Southern society looked at it; on her death he became the owner of 150 slaves willed to her by her father. He had grown careless of dress, bitter in speech; four years passed; clothes and manners took on fresher looks after he married Adele Cutts, a great-niece of Dolly Madison, a devout Roman Catholic; and in a gabbling underworld of politics this had been used against him; it was whispered he had on his European tour paused to kiss the foot of the Pope of Rome. He told his Illinois friends that Queen Victoria of England refused to meet him in the plain clothes of a United States senator; he therefore refused to meet the British queen.

In Russia he fared excellently; there at the palace of the Czar, he was placed on a horse with a bridle glittering with diamonds, and a saddle decorated with gold and silver. Be-

tween whiskies, he told Usher F. Linder and a circle of Illinois Democrats how a tall, fine-looking man addressed him in good English, "I have the pleasure, I presume, of receiving and welcoming to Russia, Senator Douglas of Illinois?" To which Douglas answered with a bow, "I presume I have the honor of being received and welcomed by his Majesty, Nicholas, Emperor of all the Russias."

And as Linder, after the whiskies, further recollected, the senator said: "We arrived at a cortège, and the Czar gave me the place of honor, near his own person. Linder, that was a proud day for my country. I never was vain enough to appropriate it for myself. When the little man in black was given the place of honor, it was a stroke of policy on the part of Nicholas; it amounted to saying to the hundred ambassadors from all the nations of the world: 'Gentlemen, I intend to make the great people of the great republic on the other side of the Atlantic my friends, and if any of your nations go to war with me, rest assured that that people will stand by me.' I received every attention that it was possible for mortal man to receive, all of which I knew was intended for my country."

Half the barrooms in Illinois had seen him reporting to his precinct workers what was going on in Europe and Washington, and how at Washington he let them know he was from the Mississippi Valley, which was to be the centre of a continental republic. He could put a hand on the shoulder of a young precinct worker and say, as though they had been college chums, "You—I count on your help."

Douglas could chuckle in telling of how one day he threw an arm around the shoulder of Beverly Tucker, a Virginia politician, and burbled, "Bev, old boy, I love you." Tucker asked: "Will you always love me? Will you love me when you get to be President?" "If I don't, may I be damned—and what do you want me to do for you?" was Douglas's counter-question, to which Tucker replied, "Well, when you get to be President, all I want you to do for me is to pick some public place, and put your arm around my neck, just as you are doing now, and

call me Bev!" He smoked cigars in a fashionable London boarding-house, where first a manservant and later a maidservant came to his room and told him smoking was forbidden; then came the landlady herself, prim and precise in her furbelows and rustling garments; Douglas tossed back his massive, commanding head, imperiously conveyed the intelligence, "Madam, I am an American sovereign"—and went on smoking his cigar; the landlady felt the occasion an honor and let him alone as one of earth's rulers.

He had humor, and had once confessed, "I have learned enough about the tariff to know that I know scarcely anything about it at all; and a man makes considerable progress on a question of this kind when he ascertains that fact." His passion was politics and power; what he did in politics was for power first of all; as to property and cash assets he didn't have the urge. He had bought land near Chicago for a few odd dollars; and sold one tract for $90,000.00. He was ready to throw all his real-estate winnings into the coming campaign in Illinois. Ten acres of his land he had donated to the University of Chicago. When other senators had laughed at the project of a fund to help a balloonist experiment in air mastery, he argued for it. He was a strong, fearless, many-sided, colorful man, a sort of Napoleon in politics, a performer of acrobatic and equilibristic marvels, this Steve Douglas.

Hearing that Lincoln had been named to combat him in Illinois, Douglas told a group of Republicans, "You have nominated a very able and a very honest man." To John W. Forney he said: "I shall have my hands full. Lincoln is the strong man of his party, the best stump speaker in the West." And again, "Of all the damned Whig rascals about Springfield, Abe Lincoln is the ablest and the most honest."

As Douglas started West in June, his daily movements were watched by the country. The *Chicago Times* reprinted from the *Philadelphia Press:* "Senator Douglas, accompanied by his beautiful and accomplished wife, arrived at the Girard House, en route for Chicago. He was visited by a large number of our most

influential citizens, holding quite an impromptu reception." The *Cincinnati Commercial* reprinted from the *Vincennes* (Indiana) *Sun,* a news letter sketching Douglas's opponent: "Lincoln is popular—the strongest man the opposition have—is nearly fifty years old—six feet two—slightly stoop-shouldered—very muscular and powerful—dark eyes—a quizzical, pleasant, rawboned face—tells a story better than anybody else—is a good lawyer—and is what the world calls a devilish good fellow. He would have been senator before, had not Trumbull's superior cunning overreached him. But in dignity, intellect, and majesty of mind it is not pretended that he is Douglas's equal."

Sixty miles out from Chicago, a special Illinois Central train with a brass band, flags, streamers, and pennants met Judge Douglas and his party on July 9th and escorted the statesman to Chicago. At the Twelfth Street depot a crowd of thousands gave him cheers of welcome, women on doorsteps waved handkerchiefs, cannon boomed a salute of 150 guns. The committee on arrangements placed the senator in an open carriage drawn by six horses and he was driven through avenues of buildings decorated with national flags. This was the city where four years before a crowd had hooted him down.

As he stepped out on the Lake Street balcony of the Tremont House that night, rockets and red fire lit the street; he gazed into what the *Chicago Times* called "an ocean of upturned faces," and his eyes met a transparent sign reading, "Welcome to Stephen A. Douglas, the Defender of Popular Sovereignty." The chairman began a speech of introduction and had to quit because the crowd in the street started a fight with hack drivers who had tried to plow through the mass of people and deliver distinguished guests at the Tremont House; as between the crowd and the hack drivers the wrangle was a stand-off; one man was knocked down with the butt end of a whip; one driver was pulled off his seat three times. As the horses, people, and hack drivers were untangled, Judge Douglas began a speech that lasted an hour and a half.

Lincoln sat near by and heard Douglas refer to him as "a

kind, amiable, and intelligent gentleman, a good citizen, and an honorable opponent." He heard Douglas say to the swarming thousands amid the lights and smoke of the street: "Mr. Lincoln advocates boldly and clearly a war of sections, a war of the North against the South, of the free states against the slave states—a war of extermination—to be continued relentlessly until the one or the other shall be subdued, and all the states shall either become free or become slave."

And the night afterward Lincoln spoke from the Tremont House balcony to a crowd somewhat smaller; rockets blazed; the brass band of the German Republican Club from the Seventh Ward rendered music. And amid other issues of the day Lincoln said: "I do not claim, gentlemen, to be unselfish; I do not pretend that I would not like to go to the United States Senate; I make no such hypocritical pretense, but I do say to you that in this mighty issue, it is nothing to you—nothing to the mass of the people of the nation—whether or not Judge Douglas or myself shall ever be heard of after this night."

To Gustave Koerner, a congressman and leader of German Republicans down-state, Lincoln wrote about the importance of reaching German voters through German speakers, and noted, regarding Douglas in Chicago: "He drove back a few Republicans who were favorably inclined towards him. His tactics just now, in part is, to make it appear that he is having a triumphal entry into, and march through the country; but it is all as bombastic and hollow as Napoleon's bulletins sent back from his campaign in Russia. I was present at his reception in Chicago, and it was certainly very large and imposing; but judging from the opinions of others better acquainted with faces there, and by the strong call for me to speak, when he closed, I really believe we could have voted him down in that very crowd. Our meeting, twenty-four hours after, called only twelve hours before it came together, and got up without trumpery, was really as large and five times as enthusiastic. I write this for your private eye, to assure you that there is no solid shot in these bombastic parades of his."

Chapter 112

DURING the hot summer weeks in Illinois, as the corn was growing knee-high and then shoulder-high, Lincoln and Douglas had their coats off, making public speeches, writing private letters, listening to whisperers of gossip, watching various newspapers bawl and bark at each other.

Lincoln pointed to politicians following Douglas, expecting Douglas some day to be President of the United States. "They have seen in his round, jolly, fruitful face, post offices, land offices, marshalships, and Cabinet appointments, chargé-ships and foreign missions, bursting and sprouting in wonderful exuberance, ready to be laid hold of by their greedy hands. They rush about him, sustain him, give him marches, triumphal entries."

That on the one hand. And on the other hand: "Nobody has ever expected me to be President. In my poor lean, lank face nobody has ever seen that any cabbages were sprouting out." And effective sarcasm it was that he used in telling a crowd, "Plainly, you stand ready saddled, bridled, and harnessed, and waiting to be driven."

Not since the days of Thomas Jefferson had any American politician reached out with so direct a passion in appealing to the people as though freedom was a word that meant something to be used, as though a free country and a free people connected with causes and oaths and responsibilities. He explained the Fourth of July as a day for Americans to be thoughtful and to read the Declaration of Independence. "We are now a mighty nation; we are about thirty millions of people; and we own and inhabit about one-fifteenth of the dry land of the whole earth." He mentioned "iron men," the fathers and grandfathers of Americans then living; those iron men had fought the American Revolution. "We have among us, perhaps, half our people who are not descendants at all of these men; they are men who have come from Europe—German, Irish, French, and Scandinavian—

men that have come from Europe themselves, or whose ancestors settled here, finding themselves our equal in all things."

He was speaking in Chicago where the different nationalities he named had churches, schools, saloons, gathering-places where they talked about "the old country" and "this new country," where they were asking themselves in what special and particular ways this new country was better than the old. Lincoln had looked from the Tremont House balcony into their torch-lighted faces turned up to hear his words.

And he said of the newcomers who had no grandfathers in the American Revolution: "If they look back to trace their connection with those days by blood, they find they have none; they cannot carry themselves back into that glorious epoch and make themselves feel they are part of us; but when they look through that old Declaration of Independence, they find that those old men say that 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal,' and then they feel that that moral sentiment taught in that day evidences their relation to those men, that it is the father of all moral principle in them, and that they have a right to claim it as though they were blood of the blood, and flesh of the flesh, of the men who wrote that Declaration; and so they are."

And he passed on to a proud, ironic scorn: "Those arguments that are made, that the inferior race are to be treated with as much allowance as they are capable of enjoying; that as much is to be done for them as their condition will allow—what are these arguments? They are the arguments that kings have made for enslaving the people in all ages of the world. You will find that all the arguments in favor of kingcraft were of this class; they always bestrode the necks of the people—not that they wanted to do it, but because the people were better off for being ridden. That is their argument, and this argument of Judge Douglas is the same old serpent that says, You work and I eat, you toil and I will enjoy the fruits of it."

He recognized conditions, necessities; perfection is difficult. He quoted the Savior, "Be ye perfect"; it was an ideal, impos-

sible to realize, but worth striving for. "In relation to the principle that all men are created equal, let it be as nearly reached as we can. If we cannot give freedom to every creature, let us do nothing that will impose slavery upon any other creature." Thus he would explain the meaning of the Fourth of July. It was not merely a day for the fizzling of firecrackers.

His blunt, short words in a speech in Springfield declared: "All I ask for the negro is that, if you do not like him, let him alone. If God gave him but little, that little let him enjoy." And again as to all men being born equal: "Certainly the negro is not our equal in color—perhaps not in many other respects; still, in the right to put into his mouth the bread that his own hands have earned, he is the equal of every other man, white or black. In pointing out that more has been given you, you cannot be justified in taking away the little which has been given him."

He discussed necessity, saying: "I yield to all which follows from necessity. What I would most desire would be the separation of the white and black races."

He expected trouble, a crisis, perhaps war, between the states. He didn't wish what seemed to be coming. He expected it. That was what he meant in the house-divided-against-itself speech. "I did not express my wish on anything. I simply expressed my expectation. Cannot Judge Douglas perceive a distinction between a purpose and an expectation? I have often expressed an expectation to die, but I have never expressed a wish to die."

Whenever Judge Douglas talked for an hour he pulled from inside his Prince Albert coat the opening paragraph of Lincoln's House Divided speech and read, "I believe that this government cannot endure permanently," to show that it meant Lincoln wished for a bloody war between the states. And whenever Lincoln spoke for an hour he too read the paragraph and said it meant just what it said; he expected a crisis; he didn't wish it.

Chapter 113

WHEN Lincoln or Herndon came back from the Springfield post office with the morning mail, they carried such newspapers as the *Chicago Tribune* and the *New York Tribune,* western and eastern Republican papers; the *Anti-Slavery Standard,* the *Emancipator* and *National Era,* Abolitionist and antislavery papers; the *Charleston* (S. C.) *Mercury* and the *Richmond* (Va.) *Enquirer,* southern proslavery papers.

Lincoln was trying to fathom what would be happening the next year and the year after. Southern newspapers at times were saying slavery would be a good thing not only for black people but for some classes of white workers. Lincoln got the *Illinois State Journal* to reprint opinions such as one from the *Richmond Enquirer,* reading: "Northern free society is . . . burdened with a servile class of mechanics and laborers, unfit for self-government, and yet clothed with the attributes and powers of citizens. Master and slave is a relation in society as natural and necessary as parent and child; and the Northern States will yet have to introduce it."

Herndon put into Lincoln's hands, and Lincoln read, a book by a Virginia sociologist, George Fitzhugh. Lecturing at Yale University, Fitzhugh told the students that so-called democracy, and so-called republican government, had broken down in Europe and was breaking down in America. "Free society in Western Europe is a failure; . . . it betrays premonitory symptoms of failure even in America; the North is silent, and thus tacitly admits the charge." To an Abolitionist, Fitzhugh had written, "I am quite as intent on abolishing Free Society, as you are on abolishing slavery." To another Abolitionist: "We live in a dangerous crisis, and every patriot and philanthropist should set aside all false delicacy. . . . I believe Slavery natural, necessary, indispensable. You think it inexpedient, immoral, and criminal. Neither of us should withhold any facts that will enable the public to form correct opinions."

After interviewing many leading Abolitionists, Fitzhugh issued a book called "Cannibals All, or Slaves Without Masters." He warned the North that the Abolitionists stood for revolution; northern private property, churches, laws, and marriages would be swept out in flames if the Abolitionists should have their way. "A like danger threatens North and South, proceeding from the same source. Abolitionism is maturing. Men once fairly committed to negro slavery agitation—once committed to the sweeping principle, 'that man being a moral agent, accountable to God for his actions, should not have those actions controlled and directed by the will of another,' are in effect, committed to Socialism and communism, to the most ultra doctrines—to no private property, no church, no law, no government—to free love, free lands, free women, and free churches."

Fitzhugh had plans for a strong-armed government to divide the public lands among responsible men, inheritance to be by the eldest sons; landless and jobless workers were to be attached to these tracts of land as tenants for life. "Make the man who owns a thousand dollars of capital the guardian (the term master is objectionable) of one white pauper of average value; give a man who is worth ten thousand dollars ten paupers, and the millionaire a thousand. This would be an act of simple justice and mercy; for the capitalists now live by the proceeds of poor men's labour, which capital enables them to command; and they command and enjoy it in almost the proportions which we have designated."

Lincoln read on page 94 of Fitzhugh's book, "Sociology for the South," a forecast somewhat like his own House Divided speech. "The argument has commenced. One set of ideas will govern and control after a while the civilized world. Slavery will everywhere be abolished, or everywhere be re-instituted." Another Southerner spoke of "the cement in the national house beginning to crack." In a notebook Lincoln had pasted a clipping from the *Muskogee* (Alabama) *Herald,* reading: "Free society! We sicken of the name. What is it but a conglomeration of greasy mechanics, filthy operatives, small-fisted farmers, and moon-

struck theorists? All the Northern and especially the New England States are devoid of society fitted for well-bred gentlemen. The prevailing class one meets with is that of mechanics struggling to be genteel and small farmers who do their own drudgery, and yet who are hardly fit for association with a Southern gentleman's body-servant. This is your *free society,* which your Northern hordes are endeavoring to extend into Kansas."

Also in the same leather-covered scrapbook, six by four inches in size, with a brass clasp, Lincoln pasted the Declaration of Independence paragraph declaring all men created equal, followed by two passionate sentences from Henry Clay of Kentucky. "I repeat it, sir, I never can, and never will, and no earthly power will make me vote, directly or indirectly, to spread slavery over territory where it does not exist. Never, while my heart sends the vital fluid through my veins—never!"

Lincoln understood well that these ideas and feelings had sympathizers in the North. He had met it in the faces of that crowd he spoke to in Petersburg when he aimed to "soak them with facts." In that same year Dumas J. Van Deren of Charleston, Illinois, became editor of the *Mattoon National Gazette,* a Buchanan organ, which advised its readers, "If Illinois were a slave state, the best men of Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee, and even states farther south, would be here as soon as they could remove their families." Van Deren wrote too, "The novelty of free labor is a mere humbug," and predicted the farmers of Illinois would favor slavery for Illinois if a state constitution legalizing slavery should be voted on. He wrote to a South Carolina newspaper: "Send your young men here, who can remain here and vote. If by our united efforts we shall be able to carry our point, the southern people will possess the key to the western world." The *Jackson Mississippian* joined in this view, declaring, "Establish slavery in Illinois and it would give us the key to the great West."

Lincoln felt a thing cruel and snobbish creeping farther into American philosophy. He tried to put the logic, passion, and tears of this feeling in his speeches.

With irony so sad it was musical and with sentences crowded with implications, he told three or four hundred people at Edwardsville one day: "When by all these means you have succeeded in dehumanizing the negro; when you have put him down and made it impossible for him to be but as the beasts of the field; when you have extinguished his soul, and placed him where the ray of hope is blown out in darkness that broods over the damned, are you quite sure the demon you have roused will not turn and rend you? What constitutes the bulwark of our liberty and independence? It is not our frowning battlements, our bristling seacoasts, the guns of our war steamers, or the strength of our gallant army. These are not our reliance against a resumption of tyranny in our land. All of them may be turned against our liberties without making us stronger or weaker for the struggle.

"Our reliance is in the love of liberty which God has planted in our bosoms. Our defence is in the preservation of the spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of *all men, in all lands everywhere*. Destroy this spirit and you have planted the seeds of despotism around your own doors. Familiarize yourself with the chains of bondage, and you are preparing your own limbs to wear them.

"Accustomed to trample on the rights of those around you, you have lost the genius of your own independence, and become the fit subjects of the first cunning tyrant who rises among you. And let me tell you that these things are prepared for you with the logic of history, if the elections shall promise that the next Dred Scott decision and all future decisions shall be acquiesced in by the people."

He knew that his best hopes for listeners to such an appeal were the young people. The fifteen- and sixteen-year-old boys who had read "Uncle Tom's Cabin" when it was published six years before Lincoln's House Divided speech had grown into twenty-one and twenty-two-year-old voters. In what he was doing and saying Lincoln kept in mind the young men. He had always had an eye out in politics for those meant in his advice

one time that it paid to gather in "the wild shrewd boys." His own youth was never forgotten.

He knew that the challenging, radical tone of what he was saying, about the Declaration of Independence, would interest not only the foreign-born voters but also the young people of all classes, those to whom the American Revolution still had a breath of smoke and a banner of sacred flame, those who might have their dreams stirred to depths as young Abe Lincoln had when he read "The Life of Washington" by Weems and tried to figure in his imagination what fine, deathless cause it was that led men to go ragged, leaving their bloody footprints on the white snow of a Valley Forge winter.

Perhaps, after all, only the young people with dreams and wishes in their eyes would understand his language. When his talk was ended and language had failed to measure off all he wanted to say, it might be the young who would best understand the desperation of his dreams, the unmeasured lengths of the adventure he was for.

For the first year in nine or ten years the prominent lawyer, Abraham Lincoln, had filed no case in the State supreme court of Illinois. For weeks and months that year his law office was shut up, for him; the cobwebs could come on the calfskin covers of Blackstone and Coke and on Chitty's Pleadings; the spiders and moths could roam with no interruption in the dust and leaves of the tall black walnut bookcase. The reader of the law books was out among the people asking them about old laws that needed making over, renewal, telling them violence and cunning had taken the place of some of the best laws, telling them too that some laws seemed to be made as excuses, as hiding-places, as barriers, as graves, as tombs where great human principles lay wrapped in shrouds and winding-sheets.

There were times when Abraham Lincoln himself seemed to be a sort of ghost standing on a platform in broad daylight before thousands of people solemnly unwrapping the sheets about their old laws and murmuring of forgotten oaths and wasted sacrifices.

Chapter 114

On an Illinois Central Railroad train of special coaches, with a brass cannon on a flat car at the rear, Stephen A. Douglas campaigned downstate. Republican papers said he carried his own brass cannon to make sure he would be saluted when he came to a town. The Democratic papers mentioned him as a friend of civilization in connection with his making the University of Chicago a present of ten acres of land for its buildings to stand on. At Springfield a banner with the name "Douglas" was bestowed on him as a gift from the shop workers of the Chicago and St. Louis Railroad. He spoke in a picnic grove where five thousand people stood in mud and wet grass, under trees dripping from summer rain.

Handbills notified the people that Lincoln would reply to Douglas in the evening on the courthouse square. In several towns Lincoln would stand up when calls came for him, after Douglas's speech, and notify the audience where he would speak. The *Chicago Times* told its readers: "Lincoln must do something, even if that something is mean, sneaking, and disreputable. The cringing, crawling creature is hanging at the outskirts of Douglas meetings, begging the people to come and hear him."

The *New York Herald* reprinted from the *Chicago Times* an account of Lincoln's behavior at the Douglas meeting in Clinton, after Douglas finished his speech. "Mr. Lincoln gradually lengthened out his long, lank proportions until he stood upon his feet, and with a desperate attempt at looking pleasant, said that he would not take advantage of Judge Douglas's crowd, but would address 'sich' as liked to hear him in the evening at the courthouse. Having made this announcement in a tone and with an air of a perfect 'Uriah Heep,' pleading his humility, and asking forgiveness of Heaven for his enemies, he stood washing his hands with invisible soap in imperceptible water, until his friends, seeing that his mind was wandering, took him in charge and bundled him off the grounds."

At this Clinton meeting Douglas replied to Lincoln's speeches which had coupled up facts going to show that Douglas was joined in a "conspiracy" to make slavery lawful in the northern states. Douglas said, "My self-respect alone prevents me from calling it a falsehood." A few days later at Beardstown, however, he declared the conspiracy charge "an infamous lie."

The style of attack used by Lincoln included the piling up of particular facts, as at Beardstown. "I say to you, gentlemen, that it would be more to the purpose of Judge Douglas to say that he did *not* repeal the Missouri Compromise; that he did *not* make slavery possible where it was impossible before; that he did *not* leave a niche in the Nebraska Bill for the Dred Scott decision to rest in; that he did *not* vote down a clause giving the people the right to exclude slavery if they wanted to; that he did *not* refuse to give his individual opinion whether a Territorial legislature could exclude slavery; that he did *not* make a report to the Senate in which he said that the rights of the people in this regard were 'held in abeyance' and could not be immediately exercised; that he did *not* make a hasty indorsement of the Dred Scott decision at Springfield; that he does *not* now indorse that decision; that that decision does *not* take away from the Territorial legislature the power to exclude slavery; and that he did *not* in the original Nebraska Bill so couple the words State and Territory together, that what the Supreme Court has done in forcing open all the Territories for slavery, it may yet do in forcing open all the States—I say it would be vastly more to the point for Judge Douglas to say that he did *not* do some of these things, did *not* forge some of these links of overwhelming testimony, than to go vociferating about the country that possibly he may be obliged to hint that somebody is a liar."

Lincoln had run a grocery store and sold whisky, Douglas told a crowd one day. "But the difference between Judge Douglas and myself is just this," Lincoln replied, "that while I was behind the bar he was in front of it."

Suddenly came an event. Lincoln wrote a challenge. Douglas met it. A debate was to be staged. The two men were to

Springfield, July 20. 1858.

Henry C. Dumm, Esq

My dear Sir:

When I was in Beardstown last Spring, Dr. Sprague said if I would leave a bill, he would pay it before long— I do not now remember that I spoke to you about it— I am now in need of money— Suppose we say the amount shall be $50—? If the Dr. is satisfied with that, please get the money and send it to me— And while you have pen in hand, tell me what you may know about politics, down your way—

Yours as ever

A. Lincoln—

Finance and politics in a Lincoln letter of 1858 in the run for the United States Senatorship. Body of letter reads: "When I was in Beardstown last Spring, Dr. Sprague said if I would leave a bill, he would pay it before long— I do not now remember that I spoke to you about it— I am now in need of money— Suppose we say the amount shall be $50—? If the Dr. is satisfied with that, please get the money and send it to me— And while you have pen in hand, tell me what you may know about politics, down your way—"

Original in Chicago Historical Society Collection.

stand on platforms together and argue in seven different parts of the state, with all Illinois watching, and the whole country listening.

A new way of taking down speeches as men talked—shorthand writing—had been invented; the reporters would give the country "full phonographic verbatim reports," newspapers told their readers.

Shade trees were few in the Ottawa public square and most of the twelve thousand listeners were in a broiling summer sun on August 21st when the first of the debates took place. For three hours they listened. Seventeen cars full of them had come from Chicago. By train, canal boat, wagon, buggy and afoot they had arrived, waved flags, formed processions and escorted their heroes. It took a half-hour for the speakers and committees to squeeze and wedge their way through the crowd to the platform. A lumber awning over the platform broke from men scrambling on top of it; boards fell on the Douglas committee.

During three hours the acres of people listened, and, the speaking ended, they surged around their heroes and formed escorts. Lincoln was grabbed by a dozen grinning Republicans, lifted onto their shoulders, and, surrounded by a mass of Republicans headed by a brass band, he was carried to the Glover House. "With his long arms about his carriers' shoulders, his long legs dangling nearly to the ground, his long face was an incessant contortion to wear a winning smile that succeeded in being only a ghastly one," said a Democratic newspaper. The reporter for the *Philadelphia Press* noted of Lincoln as a debater: "Poor fellow! he was writhing in the powerful grasp of an intellectual giant. His speech amounted to nothing. It was made up with such expressions as 'I think it is so,' 'I may be mistaken,' 'I guess it was done,' &c., &c. There were no straightforward assertions and logical conclusions, such as fall from the lips of Douglas. He spent over half an hour reading from some old speech that he had previously made on Abolitionism. As he continued reading, there were numerous voices exclaiming, 'What book is that you are reading from?' This tended to increase his

confusion, and, after blundering and whining along, and endeavoring to tell anecdotes and nursery tales, he sat down. Lincoln is the worst used-up man in the United States. He has six appointments to meet Judge Douglas yet. I don't believe he will fill them all."

The *Chicago Times* had among its headlines: "Lincoln Breaks Down. . . . Lincoln's Heart Fails Him! . . . Lincoln's Legs Fail Him! . . . Lincoln's Tongue Fails Him! . . . Lincoln's Arms Fail Him! . . . Lincoln Fails All Over! . . . The People Refuse to Support Him! . . . The People Laugh at Him! . . . Douglas the Champion of the People! . . . Douglas Skins the 'Living Dog'! . . . The 'Dead Lion' Frightens the Canine." The *New York Evening Post* reporter said: "In repose, I must confess that 'Long Abe's' appearance is *not* comely. But stir him up and the fire of genius plays on every feature. His eye glows and sparkles, every lineament, now so ill formed, grows brilliant and expressive, and you have before you a man of rare power and of strong magnetic influence. He takes the people every time, and there is no getting away from his sturdy good sense, his unaffected sincerity, and the unceasing play of his good humor, which accompanies his close logic, and smooths the way to conviction. Listening to him on Saturday, calmly and unprejudiced, I was convinced that he has no superior as a stump speaker. He is clear, concise, and logical; his language is eloquent and at perfect command. He is altogether a more fluent speaker than Douglas, and in all the arts of debate fully his equal."

President Buchanan's party organ at Washington wished the debaters the worst of luck and called Lincoln and Douglas "a pair of depraved, blustering, mischievous, low-down demagogues." The *New York Express* hit off a contrast. "Judge Douglas stands erect and has the bearing, the presence, and the thoughts of a statesman. Mr. Lincoln throws himself into all manner of shapes when speaking, and represents a narrow idea."

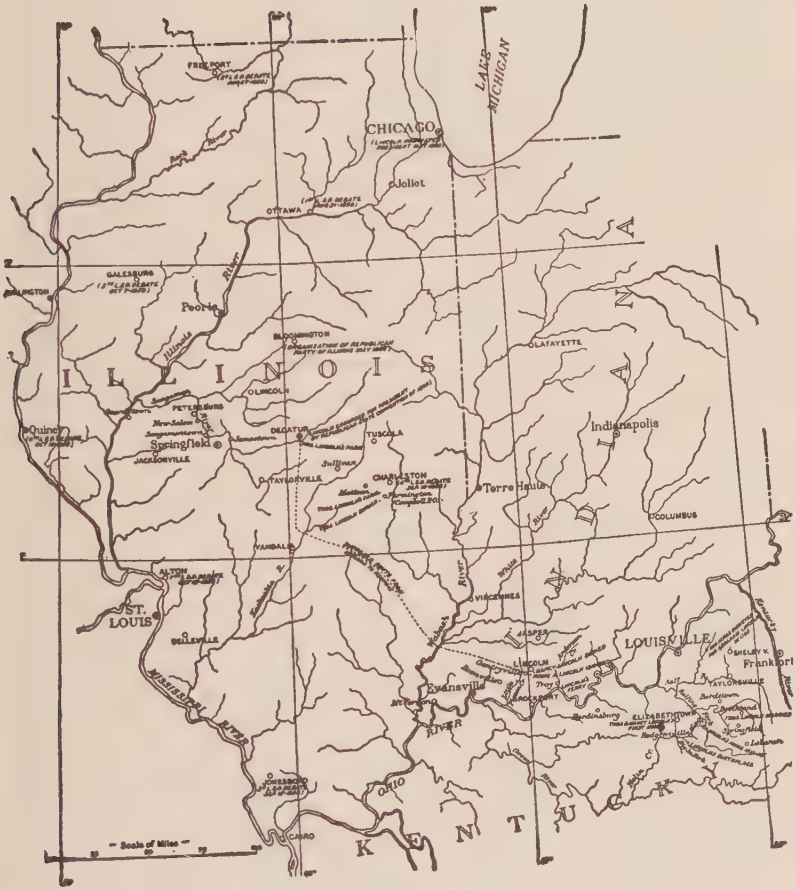
Lincoln knew there were people whose feeling about the principles and the politicians involved were like those of Mrs. William

Cratty of Seneca, who said, "I felt *so* sorry for Lincoln while Douglas was speaking, and then to my surprise I felt *so* sorry for Douglas when Lincoln replied."

On the afternoon of September 8th at Clinton, Lincoln told the people, "You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time." And in the office of the lawyer, Clifton H. Moore, he said on the same day, "Douglas will tell a lie to ten thousand people one day, even though he knows he may have to deny it to five thousand the next day."

Then came the debate in Freeport, far in the northwestern corner of Illinois, amid land made safe to settlers since the Black Hawk War put the Indians west of the Mississippi. Douglas was met by a torchlight procession; the *Chicago Times* counted one thousand torches, the *Chicago Press and Tribune* seventy-four. Lincoln rode to the speaking stand in a covered wagon drawn by six white, spanking big horses. Fifteen thousand people sat and stood through three hours of cloudy, chilly weather. Mist and a fine drizzle drifted across the air occasionally. The fifteen thousand listened. Some had come on the new sleeping-cars from Chicago the night before. One train on the Galena road had sixteen cars and a thousand passengers. The platform in the grove was jammed so thick with people around it that the committees had a hand-to-hand fight in order to clear a way for the speakers. The Dred Scott decision, Kansas, the Lecompton constitution, territorial legislatures and the extension of slavery were discussed by the orators of the day. The fifteen thousand sat in the chill mist and drizzle—listening.

As Lincoln started to say, "Fellow Citizens, Ladies and Gentlemen," he heard Deacon William Bross of the *Chicago Press and Tribune* call out: "Hold on, Lincoln. You can't speak yet. Hitt ain't here." And Lincoln turned, saying: "Ain't Hitt here? Where is he?" The shorthand reporter hadn't come. The debate was put off till a reporter was found. Then the debate could go on. Not only Illinois but the whole country was listening.



Lincoln lives fifty years in the region here mapped.

Map loaned by Ida Tarbell.

From Freeport the two debaters and the shorthand reporters dropped south on the map of Illinois a length of three hundred miles—away from black-loam prairie to rocks and thick underbrush—from a point north of Chicago to a point south of Richmond, Virginia. On the way they talked to voters and asked precinct workers about the drift. The Jonesboro crowd numbered about fourteen hundred—most of them rather cool about the great debate. The place was on land wedged between the slave states of Kentucky and Missouri; several carloads of passengers had come from those states to listen. The *Chicago Times* noted: "The enthusiasm in behalf of Douglas is intense; there is but one purpose, to reëlect him to the Senate where he has so ably and vigorously defended the Constitution and the Union, and has won for himself and the State such imperishable renown." As to Lincoln's remarks, the *Louisville Journal* noted: "Let no one omit to read them. They are searching, scathing, stunning. They belong to what some one has graphically styled the *tomahawking* species."

Three days later, on September 18th, the debaters and shorthand reporters were up at Charleston, halfway between the Wabash and Sangamon rivers, and there, in the language of the *Missouri Republican,* "The regular meeting for joint discussion between the Tall Sucker and the Little Giant came off according to programme." Escorts took the two candidates along the ten miles of road from Mattoon on the Illinois Central Railroad to Charleston. A Douglas newspaper said of his procession: "This consisted of a band, thirty-two couples, male and female, on horseback, then came the Judge, the rear being supported by a large number of horsemen. On the outskirts of Charleston, they were met by the immense delegation sent out by the citizens, these being headed by a van containing thirty-two young ladies dressed in white, with wreaths of prairie flowers on their brows, and each bearing a flag inscribed with the name of the State represented by her."

A Lincoln newspaper said his procession was led by a band of music from Indiana. "Following the carriage of Mr. Lincoln

was a wagon filled with young ladies, thirty-two in number, each representing a State. The wagon bearing this precious burden of destiny bore this significant motto: 'The Girls All Link to Lincoln, As Their Mothers Linked to Clay.' Immediately following this was a young lady on horseback . . . bearing the motto, 'Kansas—I Will Be Free!' In front of the procession was a banner inscribed, 'Support Abram Lincoln, the defender of Henry Clay.' At Charleston, a vast throng was awaiting the procession, and welcomed it with cheers and huzzas. From the Capitol House to the courthouse a banner was stretched, on which was sketched an emigrant wagon, drawn by two yoke of oxen, driven by a young stripling, and over the caricature the words, 'Abe's entrance into Charleston thirty years ago.' When it is remembered that thirty years ago Mr. Lincoln emigrated to this place from Kentucky, driving his father's team *à la* the design on the banner, this had peculiar significance. It attracted much attention during the day."

In his little reception speech, Lincoln faced the thirty-two girls whose white dresses were dusty and streaked from the ten-mile ride; above their shy eyelashes were blue velvet caps wreathed with green around one white star; Lincoln told the wagonload of them that they were "a basket of flowers." One reporter exclaimed: "Oh! how fearfully dusty candidates and cavalcades were when they arrived in front of the hotels." The *New York Evening Post* reporter noticed: "Across the main street were suspended three flags bearing Lincoln's name and a huge white banner bearing on one side the words, 'Coles County for Lincoln' and on the other an immense painting of a man driving a team of six horses. This was Abe as he appeared thirty years ago, when he drove a wagon across the country; *then* a poor teamster, unnoticed and unknown; *now* the object of almost idolatrous devotion from the people of the same county."

Twelve thousand people sat and stood at the county fair grounds—and listened. They heard Douglas accuse Lincoln of not standing by the soldiers in the field during the Mexican War when Lincoln was in Congress; and they saw Lincoln pause in

his reply, step back, and take Orlando B. Ficklin by the collar and drag Ficklin to the front of the platform to testify that when he, Ficklin, was in Congress he knew that Lincoln voted the same as Douglas for the benefit of soldiers.

Even those who didn't remember anything afterward about the Nebraska Bill, Dred Scott, and a conspiracy to nationalize slavery, did remember that Lincoln stepped back, grabbed Ficklin by the collar and dragged him forward to testify. Some said they heard Ficklin's teeth rattle as Lincoln shook him. It was talked about during the next six weeks of cornhusking in the counties roundabout.

The *Chicago Times* noted that toward the south in Illinois, Lincoln "found himself among gentlemen" and was treated with courtesy, while "at Freeport they insulted Senator Douglas, pelting him with watermelon rind and otherwise ill-using him."

As Douglas traveled from Charleston to Oquawka, one of the Buchanan Democrats, whom the Douglas Democrats had nicknamed "Stinkfingers," wrote a sarcastic letter to the *Galesburg Democrat* about Judge Douglas stopping over in Galesburg on his way to Oquawka. "It was whispered about that the Little Giant would arrive on the Peoria train at two o'clock. A self-appointed committee, numbering three persons, having hoisted their colors, straightened their hair and mustaches, and wiped the last horn off their lips with their coat-sleeves, made tracks for the depot. As soon as the cars stopped the committee rushed into the hind car. Judge Douglas was visible and G. W. Ford said, 'How d'ye do, Mr. Douglas,' as naturally as possible. Mr. Douglas replied, 'I am tolerable!' The rest of the Committee then went through the same performance, each one closing up, saying, 'This is fine weather,' then squirting a little tobacco juice and looking sidewise at Mr. Douglas. A sort of procession was now formed, consisting of one carriage and 18 or 20 persons on foot; among the pedestrians I observed 3 colored boys who seemed to be perfectly at home. Mr. Douglas had on a white hat and coat. This imposing spectacle then moved on, led by the committee to Anthony's lumberyard, then down to Main

Street. All the faithful in the city had by this time collected, and one of them went so far as to propose a cheer, but Mr. Douglas, saying at about this time that he would like some water to wash himself, put a sudden stopper on this." The letter, signed "Buccaneer," indicated only in slight degree the depths of scorn felt by the Buchanan Democrats for Douglas.

On October 7th, in the itinerary, came Galesburg, in Knox County, where Yankee settlers twenty years before had bought 10,000 acres of land for $14,000, had seen their city widen across the corn lands till it held 5,000 people, had bought stock in the Peoria, Oquawka & Burlington Railroad, established rail connections with Chicago and no longer hauled their corn by wagon nor walked their hogs 160 miles to the Chicago market. From Kentucky, Tennessee, Britain, Ireland, Sweden, Germany, had come farmers and wage workers. In the 1856 election for President there were 2,800 Republican votes as against 1,400 Democratic votes in Knox County.

Twenty thousand people and more sat and stood hearing Lincoln and Douglas speak for three hours, while a chilly northwest wind blew at a rate that tore some of the flags and banners to rags. Heavy downpours of rain the day and night before had left the air damp, and the smiling receptions to the orators during the day were carried on in raw weather.

A procession had met Lincoln in Knoxville. He had been serenaded the night before by a brass band and stepped out on the porch of the Hebard House; one man in the crowd held up a lantern to show Lincoln's face, and he opened his speech, "My friends, the less you see of me the better you will like me." In the morning he sat in a buggy to ride the five miles to Galesburg in line with a mile of buggies and wagons. Uncle Benny Hebard pointed at a house, saying, "There is where Isaac Gulliher lives." And the mile of buggies and wagons stopped ten minutes while Lincoln stepped in and drank a dipper of water with old Sangamon County friends.

West of the race track at Galesburg they met another procession of buggies, wagons, hayracks, floats, men on horses with

banners; Republicans said the procession was "about long enough to reach around the town and tie in a bowknot." And they took Lincoln to the home of Mayor Henry Sanderson, a half-block from the public square.

The mayor helped with towels and warm water for Lincoln to take a bath; he saw Lincoln stripped, the lean, hard organization of muscles that sheathed the bony framework; and Henry Sanderson told men about it afterward, with a quiet lighting up of his face, "The strongest man I ever looked at."

Douglas had come in from Oquawka and taken dinner in the home of G. C. Lanphere, where he met close friends and asked them how as Douglas men they liked it that President Buchanan had thrown out the Galesburg postmaster just because he was a Douglas man. In the kitchen of the house Mrs. Lanphere was saying: "Mr. Douglas used to be very fond of my mince pies in the old days when we lived in Monmouth and he used to stop with us. I think he wanted to stay with us so that he could go out in our peach orchard and rehearse his speeches. I heard him from the kitchen window. Then he would go down to the courthouse and make the same grand speech there."

As the family took chairs and pulled up to the table with Douglas, he turned to Mrs. Lanphere and, with a shine in his blue eyes, said, "Matilda, have you got a mince pie such as you used to have in those old times?" She told him one had been baked especially for him, and, as she said to neighbors afterward: "That pie, with a cup of coffee, was all the dinner he partook of. The turkey, the oysters, and other dishes he didn't touch. He ate the pie with decided relish and remarked, 'That pie and that coffee were worth taking a long trip to enjoy!' "

To both of the candidates came committees of young men and women from Knox and Lombard colleges; they had satin banners to present. Also there came politicians, advisers, citizens, boys who wanted a peep at a famous man. And the procession that ended at the debating platform on the Knox College campus, included floats showing the methods of the Colton Foundry and the George W. Brown Cornplanter Works.

The raw northwest wind blew, ripping banners and bunting; the sky stayed gray; the damp air sent a chill to the bones of those who forgot their overcoats or who didn't have overcoats to forget. For three hours the two debaters spoke to an audience of people who buttoned their coats tighter and listened. They spilled their sentences into the air, hoping the wind would not blow away their words to be lost in the cottonwood trees and the prairie horizons.

Twenty thousand people sat and stood listening. They had come from the banks of the Cedar Fork Creek, the Spoon River, the Illinois, the Rock, and the Mississippi rivers, with hands toughened on the plow handles, legs with hard bunched muscles from tramping the clods behind a plow team, with ruddy and wind-bitten faces. They were of the earth; they could stand the raw winds of the earth as long as any two lawyers who wished to speak to them. What if one cow-milking was missed or the hogs had to root for themselves a day?

Douglas opened, speaking an hour. Then Lincoln took an hour and a half. In connection with a fraud that he accused Douglas of using, and then using over again, Lincoln said it was like "the fisherman's wife, whose drowned husband was brought home with his body full of eels." When she was asked what was to be done with him, she said, "Take the eels out and set him again."

Douglas was sitting by, in an overcoat, with a broad-brimmed white hat, smoking a cigar. When the time came for his half-hour of reply, he slipped out of his overcoat in a hurry, stepped to the front, denied Lincoln's charges, and four times walked up to Lincoln and shook his clenched fist close to Lincoln's nose. Lincoln kept his face solemn and looked Douglas in the eye, while some men in the audience got restless, started to pull off their coats, one Republican saying, "Let them come on." Then Douglas branched into another subject, and quiet came.

After the debate the *Chicago Times* reporter wrote: "The cold was intense. Mr. Lincoln, when he mounted the stand, was nervous and trembling; whether from cold or through fear of

what was in store for him, we are unable to say; but before the close of the debate he was the most abject picture of wretchedness we have ever witnessed. His knees knocked together, and the chattering of his teeth could be heard all over the stand. When Senator Douglas replied, he looked pitiful beyond expression, and curled himself up in a corner to avoid facing the bitter denunciation of the Senator and the scorn and derision with which he was treated by the crowd. When Senator Douglas concluded, the applause was perfectly furious and overwhelming; he was surrounded by an immense mass of people who accompanied him to his hotel, which was thronged with people to congratulate him upon his great success, whilst Lincoln, entirely forgotten, was taken care of by a few friends, who wrapped him in flannels and tried to restore the circulation of blood in his almost inanimate body. Poor Lincoln! He was not even visible to the friends who came to weep with him."

A Galesburg newspaper dubbed Douglas "the Shortboy Senator." The Quincy *Daily Whig* reporter wrote: "Douglas actually foamed at the mouth during his speech; hydrophobia is not confined to the dog-days. When Douglas concluded, 'Old Abe' mounted the stand and was received with three such tremendous cheers as made the welkin ring. His happy, good-humored countenance—in such marked contrast with that of Douglas, which is black and repulsive enough to turn all the milk in Egypt sour —at once cheered and animated the immense crowd."

There was one disappointment in the day. Two thousand people on a train of twenty-two cars started from Peoria in the morning; it was too heavy a load; the engine broke down several times; the passengers picked hazel-nuts and rambled hillsides; just as the train arrived in Galesburg the great debate was over.

Six days later, in Quincy, on the Mississippi River, a crowd of twelve thousand people came from three states, Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri, and sat and stood listening for three hours to the debaters. And two days later, farther down the Mississippi, looking from free-soil Illinois across the river to slave-soil Mis-

souri, the two debaters had their final match, in Alton, before 6,000 listeners.

One young man kept a sharp impression of Lincoln at Alton, beginning to speak. "He rose from his seat, stretched his long, bony limbs upward as if to get them into working order and stood like some solitary pine on a lonely summit."

Chapter 115

Two men had spoken from platforms in Illinois to crowds of people in broiling summer sun and raw, sour northwest winds of fall—to audiences that stretched out beyond the reach of any but a well-trained, carrying voice. And farther than that the two men had given the nation a book. The main points of the Lincoln-Douglas debates reached millions of newspaper readers. Columns and pages of the speeches of the debates were published. Some newspapers in the larger cities printed the shorthand reports in full.

A book of passion, an almanac of American visions, victories, defeats, a catechism of national thought and hope, was in the paragraphs of the debates between "the Tall Sucker and the Little Giant." A powerful fragment of America breathed in Douglas's saying at Quincy: "Let each state mind its own business and let its neighbors alone! If we will stand by that principle, then Mr. Lincoln will find that this great republic can exist forever divided into free and slave states. . . . Stand by that great principle, and we can go on as we have done, increasing in wealth, in population, in power, and in all the elements of greatness, until we shall be the admiration and terror of the world, . . . until we make this continent one ocean-bound republic. Under that principle we can receive that stream of intelligence which is constantly flowing from the Old World to the New, filling up our prairies, clearing our wildernesses, and building cities, towns, railroads, and other internal improvements, and thus make this the asylum of the oppressed of the whole earth."

It was the private belief of Douglas, though he would have lost blocks of votes by saying so, that a cordon of free states could be erected on the Great Plains, with railroads crossing them to the Pacific, and that after their settlement with towns and cities there would be peace and prosperity.

Those who wished quiet about the slavery question, and those who didn't, understood the searching examination for truth in Lincoln's inquiry: "You say slavery is wrong; but don't you constantly argue that this is not the right place to oppose it? You say it must be opposed in the free states, because slavery is not there; it must not be opposed in the slave states, because it is there; it must not be opposed in politics, because that will make a fuss; it must not be opposed in the pulpit, because it is not religion. Then where is the place to oppose it? There is no suitable place to oppose it."

So many could respond to the Lincoln view: "Judge Douglas will have it that I want a negro wife. He never can be brought to understand that there is any middle ground on this subject. I have lived until my fiftieth year, and have never had a negro woman either for a slave or a wife, and I think I can live fifty centuries, for that matter, without having had one or either." Pointing to the Supreme Court decision that slaves as property could not be voted out of new territories, Lincoln said, "His Supreme Court, coöperating with him, has squatted his squatter sovereignty out." The argument had got down as thin as "soup made by boiling the shadow of a pigeon that had starved to death."

Lincoln was trying to stir up strife and rebellion, according to Douglas, and, "He who attempts to stir up odium and rebellion in this country against the constituted authorities, is stimulating the passions of men to resort to violence and to mobs, instead of to the law. Hence I tell you that I take the decisions of the Supreme Court as the law of the land, and I intend to obey them as such." He was the sincere spokesman of powerful men. "Suppose Mr. Lincoln succeeds in destroying public confidence in the Supreme Court, so that people will not respect its de-

cisions, but will feel at liberty to disregard them, and resist the laws of the land, what will he have gained? He will have changed the government from one of laws into that of a mob, in which the strong arm of violence will be substituted for the decisions of the courts."

Douglas said he would not be brutal. "Humanity requires, and Christianity commands, that you shall extend to every inferior being, and every dependent being, all the privileges, immunities, and advantages which can be granted to them consistent with the safety of society." When he had sat at a table in Washington with Clay, Cass, Webster, what was their unified aim? "To devise means and measures by which we could defeat the mad and revolutionary schemes of the northern Abolitionists and southern disunionists." He wished the country to know: "They brought Fred Douglass to Freeport, when I was addressing a meeting there, in a carriage driven by the white owner, the negro sitting inside with the white lady and her daughter. I am told that one of Fred Douglass's kinsmen, another rich black negro, is now traveling in this state making speeches for his friend Lincoln as the champion of black men." America was a young and growing nation. "It swarms as often as a hive of bees. In less than fifteen years, if the same progress that has distinguished this country for the last fifteen years continues, every foot of vacant land between this and the Pacific Ocean, owned by the United States, will be occupied. And just as fast as our interests and our destiny require additional territory in the North, in the South, or on the islands of the ocean, I am for it, and when we acquire it I will leave the people free to do as they please on the subject of slavery and every other question."

Lincoln attacked a Supreme Court decision as "one of the thousand things constantly done to prepare the public mind to make property, and nothing but property, of the negro in all the states in this Union." In Kansas, the Douglas "self-government" proposed for all new western territories had been "nothing but a living, creeping lie." Why was slavery referred to in "covert language" and not mentioned plainly and openly in the United

States Constitution? Why were the words "negro" and "slavery" left out? "It was hoped when it should be read by intelligent and patriotic men, after the institution of slavery had passed from among us, there should be nothing on the face of the great charter of liberty suggesting that such a thing as negro slavery had ever existed among us. They expected and intended that it should be put in the course of ultimate extinction."

Was it not always the single issue of quarrels? "Does it not enter into the churches and rend them asunder? What divided the great Methodist Church into two parts, North and South? What has raised this constant disturbance in every Presbyterian general assembly that meets?" It was not politicians; this fact and issue somehow operated on the minds of men and divided them in every avenue of society, in politics, religion, literature, morals. "That is the issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between two principles. The one is the common right of humanity, and the other the divine right of kings. It is the same spirit that says, 'You toil and work and earn bread, and I'll eat it.' No matter in what shape it comes, whether from the mouth of a king who seeks to bestride the people of his own nation and live by the fruit of their labor, or from one race of men as an apology for enslaving another race, it is the same tyrannical principle."

The high point of the debates was in Douglas framing for Lincoln a series of questions at Ottawa. At Freeport Lincoln took up these questions one by one and replied. Then in his turn he put a series of questions to Douglas, one reading, "Can the people of a United States Territory, in any lawful way, against the wish of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from its limits, prior to the formation of a State constitution?" The answer of Douglas amounted to saying, "Yes." It raised a storm of opposition to him in the South, and lost him blocks of northern Democratic friends who wanted to maintain connections in the South.

Lincoln showed his questions to advisers beforehand; they told

him to drop the main question. He answered, "I am after larger game; the battle of 1860 is worth a hundred of this." His guess was that Douglas's answer would split the Democratic party and make a three-cornered fight for the Presidency two years later.

From a cottage on the coast of Maine, where he was resting, Jefferson Davis let it be known that he wished that the two debaters would chew each other up till there was nothing left of either, after the way of the Kilkenny cats.

Sprinkled all through the speeches of Lincoln, as published, were stubby, homely words that reached out and made plain, quiet people feel that perhaps behind them was a heart that could understand them—the People—the listeners. His words won him hearts in unknown corners of far-off places.

The sentences of his arguments and prayers when published made the same impression on some people that his actual speaking did on one man, young Francis Grierson, who heard him at Alton, and wrote: "The instant he began to speak the ungainly mouth lost its heaviness, the half-listless eyes attained a wondrous power, and the people stood bewildered and breathless. Every movement of his long muscular frame denoted inflexible earnestness, and a something issued forth, elemental and mystical, that told what the man had been, what he was, and what he would do. There were moments when he seemed all legs and feet, and again he appeared all head and neck; yet every look of the deep-set eyes, every movement of the prominent jaw, every wave of the hard-gripping hand, produced an impression, and before he had spoken twenty minutes the conviction took possession of thousands that here was the prophetic man of the present.

"Lincoln had no genius for gesture and no desire to produce a sensation; from every feature of his face there radiated the calm, inherent strength that always accompanies power. He relied on no props. With a pride sufficient to protect his mind and a will sufficient to defend his body, he drank water when Douglas, with all his wit and rhetoric, could begin or end nothing without stimulants. Here, then, was one man out of all the millions who believed in himself. What thrilled the people who stood before

Abraham Lincoln was the sight of a being who, in all his actions and habits, resembled themselves, gentle as he was strong, fearless as he was honest, who towered above them in that psychic radiance that penetrates in some mysterious way every fibre of the hearer's consciousness."

Chapter 116

A FEW days before the first of the seven debates with Douglas, Lincoln had met on the courthouse square in Springfield a Danville Republican, Judge Beckwith. The judge was worried and told Lincoln other Republicans were worried, about how Lincoln would handle himself as against Douglas. And Lincoln sat down on the steps of a hotel, asked the judge to have a seat, and then drawled, "You have seen two men about to fight?" "Yes, many times." "Well, one of them brags about what he means to do. He jumps high in the air, cracking his heels together, smites his fists, and wastes his breath trying to scare somebody. The other man says not a word. His arms are at his side, his fists doubled up, his head is drawn to the shoulder, and his teeth are set firm together. He is saving his wind for the fight, and as sure as it comes off he will win it, or die a-trying."

He had been learning more and more to live by the two rules he had written in the book of exercises in Greek Syntax: "Deliberate slowly," and "Execute promptly." It was remembered over Fulton County that Douglas had come to Havana, and had spoken of fighting, and Lincoln began his speech the next day with saying, in his most quietly rippling and comic manner: "I am informed that my distinguished friend yesterday became a little excited—nervous, perhaps—and he said something about fighting, as though referring to a pugilistic encounter between him and myself. Did anybody in this audience hear him use such language?" And there were cries of "Yes," and "Yes, yes."

Lincoln went on, quizzical and careless: "I am informed, further, that somebody in this audience, rather more excited and

nervous than himself, took off his coat, and offered to take the job off Judge Douglas's hands, and fight Lincoln himself. Did anybody here witness that warlike proceeding?" Again came cries of "Yes," with laughter and with curiosity as to what was coming next. "Well," said Lincoln, drawing himself to his full height, "I merely desire to say that I shall fight neither Judge Douglas nor his second." A fight would prove nothing. It might establish which of the two men was more muscular, but that had nothing to do with the political platforms they were running on. And if fighting Judge Douglas himself would prove nothing, still less would be proven by Lincoln fighting his bottle-holder.

Furthermore, he didn't believe Judge Douglas himself wanted a fight. "He and I are about the best friends in the world, and when we get together he would no more think of fighting me than of fighting his wife." Lincoln closed the incident by remarking: "Therefore, ladies and gentlemen, when the judge talked about fighting, he was not giving vent to any ill-feeling of his own, but merely trying to excite—well, enthusiasm against me on the part of his audience. And as I find he was tolerably successful, we will call it quits."

With only two of the debates over, Douglas knew something had hit him hard and the going would be still harder. Not only Lincoln but the Republican organization had developed a system that followed him, answered him, harassed him. The desperation of Douglas became known to the public through a telegram. What happened was told by Usher F. Linder: "A great many of Mr. Lincoln's friends followed Douglas to his large meetings, which they would address at night, attacking Douglas when he would be in bed asleep, worn out by the fatigues of the day. He telegraphed me to meet him at Freeport, and travel around the state with him and help to fight off the hellhounds, as he called them, that were howling on his path, and used this expression: 'For God's sake, Linder, come.' Some very honest operator stole the telegram as it was passing over the wire, and published it in the Republican papers. They dubbed me thenceforth with the sobriquet of 'For God's Sake Linder.' "

Shortly after the telegram to Linder, Douglas was joined by his wife, who traveled with him during most of the campaign from then on. She was a help. Lincoln referred to her when at the Capitol House in Charleston, after a debate in which Douglas had hurled wild accusations at Lincoln that he was using personalities and gossip instead of keeping the discussion on a high plane of moral ideas. Lincoln remarked to a lawyer from Greencastle, Indiana, "I flatter myself that thus far my wife has not found it necessary to follow me around from place to place to keep me from getting drunk."

From Jonesboro on it was noticed that Douglas's voice did not have the carrying power of Lincoln's. "As a stump speaker, Lincoln used Douglas up," a Galesburg lawyer observed. "In the outskirts of the crowd I could catch every word that Lincoln said, and I had difficulty hearing Douglas." One fairly accurate though slightly partisan reporter wrote from Quincy: "I was of the opinion (but I don't like to accuse Mr. Lincoln of glorying in human misery) that he even felt encouraged by the disconsolate look of his antagonist. Douglas looked very much the worse for wear. Bad whisky and the wear and tear of conscience have had their effect. So much has he changed since the commencement of the campaign that even his political enemies begin to have charitable proclivities toward him. He speaks very slowly—making a distinct pause at the end of each word, but giving as much force and accent as possible."

Lincoln had, as he promised Judge Beckwith on the hotel steps in Springfield, saved his wind, watched his reserves. His step was springy, the framework of his body elastic and rapid in doubling and undoubling as he stooped and put his hands on his knees or moved in such patterns as drove a *New York Express* reporter to say, "He throws himself into all manner of shapes." When Douglas twisted his antislavery position into one of race equality, Lincoln replied it was "a specious and fantastic arrangement of words, by which a man can prove a horse-chestnut to be a chestnut horse."

Somebody congratulated him on the sentence about the negro,

"In the right to eat the bread, without the leave of anybody else, which his own hands earn, he is my equal and the equal of Judge Douglas, and the equal of every living man." It had honestly pleased somebody. "Do you think that is fine?" he asked, with a chuckle. "If you think so, I will get that off again."

He pointed to Judge Douglas of world renown having complimented him as a "kind, amiable, and intelligent gentleman." These were pleasant titles. "Not being accustomed to flattery, it came the sweeter to me. I was rather like the Hoosier with the gingerbread, when he said he reckoned he loved it better than any other man, and got less of it." At Jonesboro, farthest south: "Did the judge talk of trotting me down to Egypt to scare me to death? Why, I know this people better than he does. I was raised just a little east of here. I am a part of this people." And as to the judge saying and repeating that he "had to be carried off the platform" at Ottawa, in other words, that Lincoln was drunk at Ottawa: "I don't want to quarrel with him—to call him a liar—but when I come square up to him I don't know what else to call him. I want to be at peace, and reserve all my fighting powers for necessary occasions."

Once he needed a swift illustrative cartoon, and said, "There is no danger that the people of Kentucky will shoulder their muskets, and, with a young nigger stuck on every bayonet, march into Illinois and force them upon us." He told what seemed to him to be the reason for a certain clause Judge Douglas put in the Nebraska Bill, ending, "I now say again, if there is any different reason for putting it there, Judge Douglas, in a good-humored way, without calling anybody a liar, can tell what the reason was."

He gave the twelve thousand people at Charleston a free lesson in logic, by shaking a finger at a man's face and saying, "I assert that you are here today, and you undertake to prove me a liar by showing that you were in Mattoon yesterday. I say that you took your hat off your head, and you prove me a liar by putting it on your head. That is the whole force of Douglas's argument."

He wished Douglas as a Democrat to know that the Democrat, Thomas Jefferson, had said, "Judges are as honest as other men, and not more so."

Was one of the debaters puffed up with pride and the other humble with a quaint Biblical humility? At Galesburg, Douglas said: "The highest compliment you can pay me during the brief half-hour that I have to conclude, is by observing a strict silence; I desire to be heard rather than to be applauded." At Quincy, Lincoln said: "I have had no immediate conference with Judge Douglas, but I will venture to say that he and I will perfectly agree that your entire silence, both when I speak and when he speaks, will be most agreeable to us."

He tried to key his openings with good humor or a bit of wisdom touched with nonsense. "Since Judge Douglas has said to you in his conclusion that he had not time in an hour and a half to answer all I had said in an hour, it follows of course that I will not be able to answer in half an hour all that he has said in an hour and a half." As to Douglas's war with the Buchanan administration he would say, "Go it, husband; go it, bear."

In the southern half of Illinois, where altars still burned to Henry Clay, he referred to Henry Clay as "my beau ideal of a statesman." As to the House Divided speech and its opening paragraph, "The judge has so often made the entire quotation from that speech that I can make it from memory." A tang of the bitter touched the humor in his comment: "I agree that there are office seekers amongst us. The Bible says somewhere that we are desperately selfish. I think we would have discovered that fact without the Bible. I do not claim that I am any less so than the average man, but I do claim that I am not more selfish than Judge Douglas."

Lincoln had puzzled the shorthand reporters. Though every syllable came distinctly, he might speak several words swiftly, and then arriving at the word or phrase he wanted to stress, "he would let his voice linger and bear hard on that, and then he would rush to the end of his sentence like lightning." Thus one

reporter heard him. "He would devote as much time to the word or two which he wished to emphasize as to a half a dozen less important words following."

The open air, the travel and excitement of the sixty speeches Lincoln made through the campaign threw him back to flat-boating days; his voice grew clearer and stronger; in November he was heavier by nearly twenty pounds than he was at the beginning of the canvass. As he sat in his hotel room in Quincy, there came in a Toledo, Ohio, man named David R. Locke. They found each other good talkers. Would he be elected to the United States Senate? Not quite. He would carry the state in the popular vote, but because of the gerrymandered districts Douglas would be elected by the legislature. He told Locke: "You can't overturn a pyramid, but you can undermine it; that's what I've been trying to do."

They spoke of a puffed-up politician in Illinois who had just died and had a big funeral, Lincoln commenting, "If General Blank had known how big a funeral he would have had, he would have died years ago."

When Locke went away, he told of his visit. "I found Mr. Lincoln surrounded by admirers, who had made the discovery that one who had previously been considered merely a curious compound of genius and simplicity was really a great man. I obtained an interview after the crowd had departed. He sat in the room with his boots off, to relieve his very large feet from the pain occasioned by continuous standing; or, to put it in his own words: 'I like to give my feet a chance to breathe.' He had removed his coat and vest, dropped one suspender from his shoulder, taken off his necktie and collar, and he sat tilted back in one chair with his feet upon another in perfect ease. He seemed to dislike clothing, and in privacy wore as little of it as he could."

To Locke it seemed that Douglas played politics, wriggled, dodged, and worked for Douglas and nothing else. "Lincoln, on the other hand, kept strictly to the question at issue, and no one could doubt that the cause for which he was speaking was the

only thing he had at heart; that his personal interests did not weigh a particle. He was the representative of an idea, and in the vastness of the idea its advocate was completely swallowed up. He admitted frankly all the weak points in the position of his party in the most open way, and that simple honesty carried conviction with it. His admissions of weakness, where weakness was visible, strengthened his position on points where he was strong. He knew that the people had intelligence enough to strike the average correctly. His great strength was in his trusting the people instead of considering them as babes in arms. He did not profess to know everything. He said wonderfully witty things, but never from a desire to be witty. He never cared how he made a point, so he made it. When he did tell a story it was for the purpose of illustrating and making clear a point. He was essentially epigrammatic and parabolic. He was a master of satire, which was at times as blunt as a meat-ax, and at others as keen as a razor."

And of Lincoln's face in the hotel room there in Quincy, David R. Locke said: "I never saw a more thoughtful face. I never saw a more dignified face. I never saw so sad a face."

Chapter 117

Who would get the most votes on November 2? Who, after all the talk about principles and issues, would win the race and be the next United States senator from Illinois? The week before election Bill Herndon, whose feelings often ran away with him, was writing a letter to the independent Boston preacher, Theodore Parker. "All looks well, feels right in our bones," he scribbled. "If we are defeated, it will be on this account: there are thousands of wild, roving, robbing, bloated, pock-marked Irish, who are thrown in on us by the Douglas Democracy for the purpose of outvoting us. If we are defeated there is only one thing that will do it, and that is wrong, fraud, bribery, and corruption."

Four days later Herndon wrote again: "We, throughout the state, have this question before us: 'What shall we do? Shall we tamely submit to the Irish, or shall we rise and cut their throats?' If blood is shed to maintain the purity of the ballot box, do not be at all surprised. We are roused and fired to fury. My feelings are cool. I try to persuade both parties to keep calm and cool, if possible."

What had happened? Thousands of Irishmen, weary of the bogs of "the Ould Sod," had come to America looking for work, and in Philadelphia, New York, St. Louis, and other cities it happened they had no jobs. And somehow the advice came to them to go to Illinois; tickets were handed them; they came in trainloads and on packed steamboats—filling the doubtful central counties of Illinois.

Lincoln wrote to Judd: "On alighting from the cars and walking the square at Naples on Monday, I met about fifteen Celtic gentlemen, with black carpet sacks in their hands. I learned that they had crossed over from the railroad in Brown County, but where they were going no one could tell. They dropped in about the doggeries, and were still hanging about when I left. At Brown County yesterday, I was told that about four hundred of the same sort were to be brought into Schuyler before the election, to work on some new railroad, but on reaching here I find that Bagby thinks that is not so. What I most dread is that they will introduce into the doubtful districts numbers of men who are legal voters in all respects except *residence* and who will swear to residence and thus put it beyond our powers to exclude them. They can, and I fear will, swear falsely on that point, because they know it is next to impossible to convict them of perjury upon it. Now the great reassuring fact of the campaign is finding a way to head this thing off. Can it be done at all? I have a bare suggestion. When there is a known body of these voters, could not a true man, of the '*detective*' class, be introduced among them in disguise, who could, at the nick of time, control their votes? Think this over. It would be a great thing, when this trick is attempted upon us, to have the saddle come up on the other

horse. If we can head off the fraudulent votes we shall carry the day."

Rockford and Chicago newspapers submitted evidence that laborers drawn from Chicago, northern Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, and St. Louis, were being shipped by the railroads, as construction gangs, to Mattoon, Champaign, Peoria, Bloomington, and other points. Former Governor Matteson, who had interests in the St. Louis & Alton Railroad, as well as the election of his party leader, Douglas, was named as taking a hand in the shipment of voters.

The *New York Herald* was saying that agents of Douglas had appealed to the Tammany Society, and a fund of $50,000.00 had been set aside for use in Illinois. "My bones tell me that all is not safe," Bill Herndon wrote to Parker. "Quit reading and writing, if you can, and go off on a spree."

Chapter 118

Rain fell nearly every day of the last week of October; wagon wheels sank in the roads; mud stuck to the spokes from hub to rim. Yet on Saturday, October 30, several thousand farmers out around Springfield hitched up their teams and drove in to the public square, where Abe Lincoln was to make his last speech of the campaign. Flags fluttered from wagon seats and from horse collars; red, white, and blue bunting was tied to the bridles and the whipstocks. The men and women were in their Sunday clothes, the children in their best bib and tucker.

Nine cars full of people had come from Jacksonville and waystations. The Chicago & Alton brought thirty-two cars from McLean and Logan counties, seats and aisles full, and the tops of the cars and the two engine pilots crowded with passengers. Busts of Henry Clay and of Lincoln were pictured on one banner. Cannon and firecrackers boomed and crackled. Marchers shouting "Lincoln and Liberty" strode behind banners reading "A. Lincoln, the Pride of Illinois" and "Abe Lincoln, our next Sena-

tor." The crowd of perhaps ten thousand people swarmed around the iron railing on the east side of the Statehouse square, waves of people filling the steps of the courthouse and the Marine Bank, all facing toward the speakers' stand.

Lincoln began his speech at about two o'clock, and after a few words something happened. John H. Morgan, of Petersburg, told of it afterward: "There was a well-dressed, self-important-looking man on a fine horse who pushed his way in, up close to Lincoln, and when Lincoln said he was not in favor with interfering with slavery where it then existed, this man said in a loud voice so all could hear, 'How would you like to sleep with a nigger?' Lincoln stopped, and without replying looked the man in the eyes with a sad, pitiful look as if he felt sorry for him. The man hung his head, turning to get away, but the crowd held him, spitting all over him. Some took wet tobacco out of their mouths and threw it in his face; he was a filthy sight."

Lincoln went on with his speech. He had said: "I stand here surrounded by friends—some *political, all personal* friends, I trust. May I be indulged, in this closing scene, to say a few words of myself? I have borne a laborious, and, in some respects to myself, a painful part in the contest."

He knew that in the northern counties of Illinois he would have a far heavier vote than in most of the central counties. He was better understood politically in districts where he was personally more of a stranger. Galesburg would vote two to one for him, Jonesboro three to one against him. His final speech faced toward Jonesboro rather than Galesburg.

Facing southward, politically, he said: "The legal right of the southern people to reclaim their fugitives I have constantly admitted. The legal right of Congress to interfere with their institution in the states, I have constantly denied. In resisting the spread of slavery to new territory, and with that, what appears to me to be a tendency to subvert the first principle of free government itself, my whole effort has consisted. To the best of my judgment I have labored *for,* and not *against* the Union."

The issues were so immense, the required decisions so delicate, it was an hour for sinking personal considerations. "As I have not felt, so I have not expressed any harsh sentiment toward our southern brethren. I have constantly declared, as I really believed, the only difference between them and us, is the difference of circumstances. I have meant to assail the motives of no party, or individual; and if I have, in any instance (of which I am not conscious) departed from my purpose, I regret it."

Then came a bitterness from Abraham Lincoln's lips, spoken in words so strangely soft and lofty, that the speech was a curious bittersweet. "I have said that in some respects the contest has been painful to me. Myself, and those with whom I act have been constantly accused of a purpose to destroy the Union; and bespattered with every imaginable odious epithet; and some who were friends, as it were but yesterday, have made themselves most active in this. I have cultivated patience, and made no attempt at a retort."

And in the same tone of voice, with personal confession, he ended the speech. "Ambition has been ascribed to me. God knows how sincerely I prayed from the first that this field of ambition might not be opened. I claim no insensibility to political honors; but today, could the Missouri restriction be restored, and the whole slavery question replaced on the old ground of 'toleration' by *necessity* where it exists, with unyielding hostility to the spread of it, on principle, I would, in consideration, gladly agree, that Judge Douglas should never be *out,* and I never *in,* an office, so long as we both or either, live."

The gloaming and the dark came on that night, and the farmers had unhitched their horses and driven home; the excursion trains for Jacksonville, for McLean and Logan counties, had taken their passengers home. Trampled flags and bunting, broken whisky bottles, and the scattered rubbish of a crowd lay around the public square of Springfield.

Lincoln knew he was beaten. The Tuesday next after that Saturday might give him a popular majority, but not enough legislative districts to send him to the United States Senate.

Imported voters brought into doubtful precincts would help defeat him. That was not so hard to think of as the turnabout of former political friends, such as Crittenden, the Kentucky senator, and T. Lyle Dickey, the Chicago lawyer who had awakened one morning to hear Lincoln say, "Dickey, I tell you this nation cannot exist half slave and half free," and had answered, "Oh, Lincoln, go to sleep."

Daily newspapers had been publishing offers such as one in the *Chicago Times:* "We are authorized to announce that a gentleman of this city will bet Ten Thousand Dollars that Stephen A. Douglas will be reëlected to the Senate of the United States. Come, gentlemen Republicans, show your faith in Abe."

Chapter 119

NOVEMBER 2, Election Day, arrived, wet and raw in the northern part of the state. And though Lincoln had a majority of 4,085 votes over Douglas, it seemed Douglas held a majority of the legislature which would elect a United States senator in January.

To the old Kentucky Whig, Senator Crittenden, who had sent letters to Illinois Whigs urging support of Douglas, Lincoln wrote, saying: "The emotions of defeat are fresh upon me; but even in this mood I cannot for a moment suspect you of anything dishonorable."

He wrote to Judd about the senatorial contest to come two years later: "I shall fight in the ranks, but I shall be in no one's way for any of the places. I am especially for Trumbull's reelection." And as to the expenses of the campaign just ended, he wrote to Judd: "I am willing to pay according to my ability; but I am the poorest hand living to get others to pay. I have been on expenses so long without earning anything that I am absolutely without money now for even household purposes." Lincoln's campaign contribution would amount to more than the $500.00 he had subscribed, not counting his personal expenses for travel, hotel, sundries. "But as I had the post of honor, it

is not for me to be overnice." And Judd mustn't feel badly. "This too shall pass away."

He wrote to loyal friends. "Another explosion will soon come." Douglas managed to be supported as the best instrument both to *break down* and to *uphold* the slave power. "No ingenuity can keep this deception up a great while." He was glad he made the race. "Though I now sink out of view and shall be forgotten, I believe I have made some marks which will tell for the cause of civil liberty long after I am gone." Also, he joked; he was like the boy who stubbed his toe, "It hurt too bad to laugh, and he was too big to cry."

A gay lilt was in his note to Charles H. Ray, editor of the *Chicago Tribune,* asking for two sets of copies of that newspaper's reports of the debates with Douglas, and then writing: "I believe, according to a letter of yours to Hatch, you are 'feeling like hell yet.' Quit that—you will soon feel better. Another 'blow-up' is coming: and we shall have fun again."

Later he sent a draft for a year's subscription, writing: "I suppose I shall take the *Press & Tribune* so long as it and I both live, unless I become unable to pay for it. In its devotion to our cause always, and to me personally, last year, I owe it a debt of gratitude, which I fear I shall never be able to pay."

January 5 came; the legislature would ballot on a United States senator; there had been a lingering hope that Buchanan Democrats or other elements might turn to Lincoln—but Douglas had a majority in the joint ballot, and was elected over Lincoln.

Lincoln sat alone in his law office. Whitney came in, having just talked with a Republican who said he didn't like to follow a leader who was always getting defeated. "I expect everybody to desert me now—except Bill Herndon," Lincoln half groaned. Whitney went out, leaving Lincoln alone. He sat with his thoughts awhile, blew out the light, locked the door, stepped down to the street, and started home.

The path had been worn hogbacked, and was slippery. One foot slipped and knocked the other foot from under him. He was falling. He made a quick twist and caught himself, lit

square, and said with a ripple, "A slip and not a fall!" The streak of superstition in him was touched. He said it again, "A slip and not a fall!"

And far off in Washington, Stephen A. Douglas was reading one telegram, from the *State Register,* "Glory to God and the Sucker Democracy, Douglas 54, Lincoln 41," and another telegram from C. H. Lanphier: "Announcement followed by shouts of immense crowd present. Town wild with excitement. Democrats firing salute. Guns, music, and whisky rampant." And to his compatriots, Douglas wired the message, "Let the voice of the people rule."

Chapter 120

A THUNDERSTORM had come up one night when Lincoln was campaigning at Petersburg, and he and Henry Villard, correspondent for the *New York Staats-Zeitung,* crawled into a railroad box car to wait until their train for Springfield arrived. The two men sat on the floor of the car, chins hung over knees, and talked in the dark about the weather, crops, religion, politics.

Lincoln said he was surprised to find himself running for United States senator; when he was a country store clerk, all he asked was to get to the state legislature. And he laughed, "Since then, of course, I have grown some." As to running for senator, "My friends got me into this."

Villard felt the laughs were "peculiar" as Lincoln rambled on concerning himself for senator. "Now, to be sure, I am convinced that I am good enough for it; but in spite of it all, I am saying to myself every day: 'It is too big a thing for you; you will never get it.' Mary [Mrs. Lincoln] insists, however, that I am going to be senator and President of the United States too."

And there was light enough in the box car for Villard to see Lincoln, with arms hugging knees, roaring another long laugh, and shaking in legs and arms at his wife's ambition for him

to be President. The fun of it swept him as he shook out the words, "Just think of such a sucker as me being President!"

As the raindrops ran off the sheltering box car, and the Springfield train didn't arrive, they talked on. Lincoln complimented Villard on his fluent English speech, and asked Villard, who was a German university graduate, if it were true that most of the educated people in Germany were "infidels." Villard replied they were not openly professed infidels, but most of them were not churchgoers. "I do not wonder at that," was Lincoln's rejoinder, as Villard heard it. "My own inclination is that way." This brought Villard to saying that for himself he didn't believe in the existence of God or the divinity of Christ or the immortality of the soul, as set forth in the doctrines of the Christian church.

Lincoln put more questions to Villard and drew out his anti-Christian ideas in full. And then, as Villard told about it later, "Lincoln did not commit himself, but I received the impression that he was of my own way of thinking." And when Villard later met the opinions of Herndon and Lamon, who claimed Lincoln was an "infidel," he said he wasn't surprised and he felt that he had correctly understood Lincoln in their box-car talk while waiting for the Springfield train, which lumbered in at half-past ten that night.

About this same time, however, Lincoln put into writing some interesting views of Bible characters compared with certain well-known Illinois characters. In a letter to Rev. James Lemen, Jr., son of an antislavery agitator who had stood for a free-soil constitution for Illinois, Lincoln wrote about Elijah Lovejoy: "Both your father and Lovejoy were pioneer leaders in the cause of freedom, and it has always been difficult for me to see why your father, who was a resolute, uncompromising, and aggressive leader, who boldly proclaimed his purpose to make both the territory and the state free, never aroused or encountered any of that mob violence which both in St. Louis and Alton confronted or pursued Lovejoy, and finally doomed him to a felon's death and a martyr's crown."

Lincoln saw in the two cases of Lemen and Lovejoy "a little parallel with those of John and Peter," as told in the Bible. "John was bold and fearless at the scene of the Crucifixion, standing near the cross receiving the Savior's request to care for his mother, but was not annoyed; while Peter, whose disposition was to shrink from public view, seemed to catch the attention of the mob on every hand, until finally, to throw public attention off, he denied his master with an oath; though later the grand old apostle redeemed himself grandly, and, like Lovejoy, died a martyr to his faith." Lincoln had thought a good deal over the character portraits in the Bible. He was convinced that "of course there was no similarity between Peter's treachery at the Temple and Lovejoy's splendid courage when the pitiless mob were closing round him." As between John and Peter at the Crucifixion, "John was more prominent or loyal in his presence and attention to the Great Master than Peter was, but the latter seemed to catch the attention of the mob."

The Golgotha parallel to be found in Illinois was that "Lovejoy, one of the most inoffensive of men, for merely printing a small paper, devoted to the freedom of the body and mind of man, was pursued to his death; while his older comrade in the cause of freedom, Rev. James Lemen, Sr., who boldly and aggressively proclaimed his purpose to make both the territory and state free, was never molested a moment by the minions of violence."

After twenty years the quick work of a mob, on one evening, was a lingering memory among men. It still haunted Lincoln. He wrote, "The madness and pitiless determination with which the mob steadily pursued Lovejoy to his doom marks it as one of the most unreasoning and unreasonable in all time, except that which doomed the Savior to the cross."

Lincoln and the Rev. Lemen were good friends. He closed his letter: "If ever you should come to Springfield again, do not fail to call. The memory of our many 'evening sittings' here and elsewhere suggests many a pleasant hour, both pleasant and helpful."

Chapter 121

GETTING railroads built and keeping them running after they were built was a peculiar process, East and West.

One day in January of 1859 the *Chicago Tribune* told its readers: "The strike on the Chicago, Alton & St. Louis Road is now becoming a serious matter. Connection of every description is almost utterly cut off between the different localities on the line and at each end of the road. The strike, be it understood, is not for higher wages but for back pay running through several months. Many of the operatives are in a famishing condition, having received no pay for a number of months. The yardmaster at Chicago took a train to Joliet yesterday where a crowd of operatives, sixty or more, took possession, ejected the yardmaster from the engine, and separated it from the train."

The strike news on the next day read, "The committee of employes at Bloomington are in quiet possession of all the offices, shops, and machinery at that point, where the general business of the company is transacted. The committee telegraphed to Governor Matteson that they would deliver up the road on condition of receiving two months' back pay and two months' wages for every month that the road was operated until all arrearages were settled. Matteson has possession of the Springfield station. We understand that all stations are in the possession of employes except Springfield."

Shortly after the strike was settled, the *Chicago Tribune* reported another curious railroad difficulty, this time in the financial field. The people of Carroll County had mortgaged their farms to the Racine & Mississippi Railroad, receiving $600,000 of bonds for mortgages of equal amount. They had hired lawyers to go into court with charges that they had been "dealt with fraudulently, emphatically swindled," and they would ask to have the mortgages set aside. Stephenson and Winnebago County sufferers had already filed suits in chancery; they held bonds to the amount of a million dollars. The *Tribune* warned farmers,

"Bonds are no equivalent for mortgages on productive farms, and no farmer ought ever to touch one."

Such were a few short and simple annals of the poor, witnessed by Lincoln in the month of January, 1859.

On the question whether the legislature or the courts were best fitted to handle cases of fraud as between the corporations and the people, Lincoln at this time wrote a memorandum, reading: "The progress of society now begins to produce cases of the transfer for debts of the entire property of railroad corporations; and to enable transferees to use and enjoy the transferred property *legislation* and *adjudication* begin to be necessary. It is said that under the general law, whenever a Railroad Company gets tired of its debts, it may transfer *fraudulently* to get rid of them. So they may, so may individuals; and which—the Legislature or the courts—is best suited to try the question of fraud in either case?

"It is said, if a purchaser have acquired legal rights, let him not be robbed of them, but if he needs *legislation,* let him submit to just terms to obtain it. Let him, say we, have general law in advance (guarded in every possible way against fraud) so that, when he acquires a legal right, he will have no occasion to wait for additional legislation; and if he has practiced fraud let the courts so decide."

Chapter 122

As richer clients came to the firm of Lincoln & Herndon, they were charged higher fees Only a few minutes of Lincoln's time were taken to examine papers and records pertaining to the two lots on which the Springfield Gas Works stood, and to make their title of possession clear. The fee was $500.00.

Politics was taking so much of his time outside the law office that he wrote to James Thornton, "I am absent altogether too much to be a suitable instructor for a law student." He advised, out of twenty years' active law practice, how Thornton's friend,

Widener, should study law. "When a man has reached the age that Mr. Widener has, and has already been doing for himself, my judgment is, that he read the books for himself, without an instructor. That is precisely the way I came to the law. Let Mr. Widener read Blackstone, Chitty, Greenleaf, get a license, and go to practice, and still keep reading. That is my judgment of the cheapest, quickest, and best way for Mr. Widener to make a lawyer of himself."

When it happened that the state governor, state auditor, and state treasurer didn't know just how to go about obeying a certain state law, they called in Lincoln and Judge Logan to tell them how. The law was one requiring the state officers to pay the state debt with bonds, but the legislature that passed the law left out any information or designation as to what the bonds should look like. Of the clause concerning the bonds, Lincoln and Logan wrote in their opinion: "Said clause is certainly indefinite, general, and ambiguous in its description of the bonds to be issued by you; giving no time at which the bonds are to be made payable, no place at which either principal or interest are to be paid, and no rate of interest which the bonds are to bear; nor any other description except that they are to be coupon bonds." The opinion analyzed the law further and then declared the language "implies that the legislature intended to invest you with a discretion," and the state officers could go ahead and issue about whatever sort of bonds they pleased, and only the legislature would be to blame.

Other lawyers wrote to him asking his opinion on points. He wrote to Henry Dummer that "as a general proposition" Dummer's clients had a right to use certain lard tanks, but "the particular phraseology of the contract" would deprive them of the use of the said Lard Tanks.

He wrote a long letter to an Ohio factory about collections. "I was blamed some," he wrote, "for not having recorded mortgages when executed. My chief annoyance with the case now is that the parties at Columbus seem to think it is by my neglect that they do not get their money." He went into explanations

of what he had actually done in getting foreclosure decrees, refusing notes, and then wrote: "My impression is that the whole of the money cannot be got very soon, anyway, but that it all will be ultimately collected, and that it could be got faster by turning in every little parcel we can, than by trying to force it through by the law in a lump." He explained also that no arrangements were framed between him and Barret, the debtor. "There are no special relations between Barret and myself. We are personal friends in a general way—no business transactions between us—and opposed on politics."

An interlude in more serious affairs came on the evening of January 25, 1859, when Lincoln joined with the Scotch and Scotch-Irish in celebrating the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns. After a supper came, according to published program, a "Grand overture composed for the occasion, by the Young American Brass Band with variations." Two Scotch pipers in Highland costumes performed. "The Star-Spangled Banner" and "Hail Columbia" were followed by "John Anderson My Jo," "Green Grow the Rushes O," "A Heart-Warm Fond Adieu," " 'Twas Even the Dewy Fields Were Green," and other songs. Tickets were two dollars.

"Concert Hall was filled," said the *Journal*. "Among the invited guests we observed the Hon. Abraham Lincoln of this city, and U. F. Linder, Esq., of Coles County. The banquet was spread by Myers, and embraced all that could be desired by the greatest epicure. The company sat down at nine o'clock and after satisfying the appetite with eatables, the 'mountain dew' was brought out, and together with a large number of mysterious looking bottles, was freely circulated. Toasts were responded to. We expected to give the toasts this morning, but they were crowded out, together with reports of several of the speeches."

Chapter 123

One evening in Bloomington, shortly after the November election in 1858, Jesse Fell was walking on the south side of the public square when he saw Lincoln coming out of the courthouse door. Fell was a landowner and land trader who bought and sold in thousand-acre tracts. Also he was a railroad promoter, and contracted with railroads for deliveries of large lots of railroad ties from off his timberland holdings. Also he was of Quaker blood, antislavery, Republican; he had given Lincoln a set of books by the Unitarian preacher and scholar, William Ellery Channing, on finding that Lincoln's views of religion were somewhat like his own; he was a little below medium height, smooth-faced, honest-spoken, and trusted and liked in Bloomington, which was the headquarters of his land deals.

Seeing Lincoln come out of the courthouse door, he stepped across the street and asked Lincoln to go with him to the law office of his brother, K. N. Fell, over the Home Bank. A calm twilight was deepening over the street outside and filtering through the window, as Fell said: "Lincoln, I have been east as far as Boston, and up into New Hampshire, traveling in all the New England states, save Maine; in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, and Indiana; and everywhere I hear you talked about. Very frequently I have been asked, 'Who is this man Lincoln, of your state, now convassing in opposition to Douglas?' Being, as you know, an ardent Republican and your friend, I usually told them we had in Illinois two giants instead of one; that Douglas was the little one, as they all knew, but that you were the big one, which they didn't all know. Seriously, Lincoln, Judge Douglas being so widely known, you are getting a national reputation *through him;* your speeches, in whole or in part, have been pretty extensively published in the East; you are there regarded by discriminating minds as quite a match for him in debate, and the truth is, I have a decided impression that if your popular history and efforts

on the slavery question can be sufficiently brought out before the people, you can be made a formidable, if not a successful, candidate for the Presidency."

Lincoln heard Fell and replied: "Oh, Fell, what's the use of talking of me for the Presidency, while we have such men as Seward and Chase, who are so intimately associated with the principles of the Republican party? Everybody knows them; nobody, scarcely, outside of Illinois, knows me. Besides, is it not, as a matter of justice, due to such men, who have carried this movement forward to its present status, in spite of fearful personal opposition, personal abuse, and hard names? I really think so."

Then Fell analyzed. Yes, Seward and Chase stood out as having rendered larger service to the Republican cause than Lincoln. "The truth is," said Fell, "they have rendered *too much* service, have made long records and said radical things which, however just and true, would seriously damage them, if nominated. We were defeated on this same issue in 1856, and will be again in 1860, unless we get a great many new votes from what may be called the old conservative parties. These will be repelled by radicals such as Seward and Chase. What the Republican party wants, to insure success in 1860, is a man of popular origin, of acknowledged ability, committed against slavery aggressions, who has no record to defend and no radicalism of an offensive character. Your discussion with Judge Douglas has demonstrated your ability and your devotion to freedom; you have no embarrassing record; you have sprung from the humble walks of life, sharing in its toils and trials; and if we can only get these facts sufficiently before the people, depend on it, there is some chance for you."

And Fell went on, "Now, Mr. Lincoln, I come to the business part of this interview. My native state, Pennsylvania, will have a large number of votes to cast for somebody. Pennsylvania don't like, overmuch, New York and her own politicians. She has a candidate, Cameron, of her own; but he will not be acceptable to a larger part of her own people, much less abroad,

and will be dropped. Through an eminent jurist and essayist of my native county in Pennsylvania, favorably known throughout the state, I want to get up a well-considered, well-written newspaper article, telling the people who you are and what you have done, that it may be circulated, not only in that state, but elsewhere, and thus help in manufacturing sentiment in your favor. I know your public life, and can furnish items that your modesty would forbid, but I don't know much about your private history: when you were born, and where, the names and origin of your parents, what you did in early life, what were your opportunities for education, and so on. And I want you to give me these. Won't you do it?"

Lincoln had been listening and said: "Fell, I admit the force of much that you say, and I admit that I am ambitious and would like to be President. I am not insensible to the compliment you pay me, and the interest you manifest in the matter; but there is no such good luck in store for me as the Presidency of the United States; besides, there is nothing in my early history that would interest you or anybody else; and, as Judge Davis says, 'It won't pay.' "

Rising from his chair, Lincoln wrapped a thick gray and brown wool shawl around his bony shoulders, spoke good night, and started down the stairway, with Fell calling out that this was not the last of the affair and Lincoln must listen and do as he asked.

Senator Seward of New York had told the country "an irrepressible conflict" was coming. "The United States must and will, sooner or later, become either a slaveholding nation or entirely a free-labor nation." Douglas had swept south to Memphis and New Orleans to say, "Whenever a territory has a climate, soil, and production making it the interest of the inhabitants to encourage slave property, they will pass a slave code."

Lincoln was writing letters warning Republicans of a trap. "The struggle in the whole North will be, as it was in Illinois last summer and fall, whether the Republican party can maintain its identity, or be broken up to form the tail of Douglas's new

kite. Some of our great Republican doctors will then have a splendid chance to swallow the pills they so eagerly prescribed for us last spring. Still I hope they will not swallow them; and although I do not feel that I owe the said doctors much, I will help them to the best of my ability, to reject the said pills."

And Herndon was writing Parker that the Napoleonic luck-star that had shone over Douglas so often might elect him as the next President. "I shiver: there is a kind of victory fatality—a manifest destiny—hanging 'round loose' about Douglas, and this idea makes me dread the future as a child does the dark. . . . Douglas is now upon the nation, and how shall it shake him off? He is a man of no deep-hearted feelings—no wide, universal, uprising, outspreading ideas—no such thing in that little man's brains. He sits down in a mid-corner and says to the rushing world, as it sweeps by, searching for its grand ideal, 'Attend to the Here and Now—no hereafter, no higher law, no God that never slumbers, watching justice.' Well, it is too bad, but it is not my philosophy to lie down and grunt or whine. I will fight him again and again."

The man to watch was that man of many mascots, Douglas. "When you can find leisure, write me your present impressions of Douglas's movements," Lincoln wrote Senator Trumbull. Herndon had again written Parker about Greeley and others flirting with Douglas. "Are the Eastern politicians all fools? They seem to be so. I am a young, undisciplined, uneducated wild man, but I can see to the gizzard of this question. The blast of the bugle, bursting on the air, blown by Freedom, calling to her braves, rolls upon us in 1860—and where are we? Why, disorganized, hooting for Douglas, and for slavery. Pretty fix, and Greeley says, 'All right.' My dog sagacity, my mud instinct, says—fool! Let him and the world beware!"

What could the North do in 1860 with Indiana, Illinois, New Jersey Republicans, disorganized? Herndon queried, and replied, "Why, get whipped out. Greeley, horn-eyed, says, 'All right, just the thing, quite practical, easy to be done.' And to which I say, 'Easy if you want to elect a proslavery Southern

man for 1860.' Come, go back with me once more, and now what do you see in Illinois? Why, a well-drilled, 'Fritz'-organized, educated, liberty-loving, God-fearing Republican party, broad and wide-awake, ready for the fight, shouting for man, liberty, justice, God, and their complex duties and relations, now and forever. Greeley, shaking his Fourier head at us, may be seen, crying, 'All wrong.' Well, it may be so; but I cannot see it. We are, for Senator, whipped, but not for State officers; and so, thank God, we are this day a sober, staunch, incorrigible fact and force in Republicanism. Here we feel our nerves and muscles and bones; they are all in place, a vital, healthy, living organism, ready to function at God's order: 'Up and at them!' Excuse me. Could not help it. Must spit it out."

The *Chicago Press and Tribune,* under the editorship of Joseph Medill, gradually taking away subscribers and influence from Greeley's *New York Tribune,* spoke the independence of the Northwest Republican; "to make no alliances, offensive or defensive, with any faction, party, or clique—to ask no favor—to give no quarter—to fight the great battle for the ascendancy of free principles as zealous, earnest men should—to be content with defeat as long as it must be endured—to use success wisely when we win it." A threat to Greeley and Seward and others in the East was noted. "If we are to have the coöperation of the party elsewhere, well; if not, Illinois is sovereign, and her sons can walk alone!"

Newspapers in small towns in Midwest states had begun asking, "Why not Abraham Lincoln for President of the United States?" A Chicago editor had written to Lincoln during the debates with Douglas: "You are like Byron, who woke up one morning and found himself famous. People wish to know about you. You have sprung at once from the position of a capital fellow, and a leading lawyer in Illinois, to a national reputation."

Rumors and whispers from plotters came to Lincoln's ears. As to a certain newspaper article, he wrote Trumbull he hadn't seen it and didn't wish to see it. "Any effort to put enmity between you and me is as idle as the wind. I cannot conceive

it possible for me to be a rival of yours, or to take sides against you in favor of any rival." As to visiting Kansas and speaking at a convention, he would like to, but he had to keep an eye on the law practice by which he earned his living. "Last year," he wrote, "I lost pretty near all."

He struck at Douglas, speaking in Chicago on the night of the city election, March 1. Republicans who believed they could absorb Douglas would find in the end that Douglas had absorbed them. As to the judge's argument that the Almighty had drawn a line across the continent, on the one side of which the soil must be cultivated by slave labor, on the other by white labor, Lincoln urged, "Once admit that a man rightfully holds another man as property on one side of the line, and you must, when it suits his convenience to come to the other side, admit that he has the same right to hold his property there."

Lincoln softened his declaration against the further spread of slavery. "I do not wish to be misunderstood upon this subject of slavery in this country. I suppose it may long exist; and perhaps the best way for it to come to an end peaceably is for it to exist for a length of time." And to a Rock Island editor, who wrote twice that spring asking him to run for President, Lincoln replied: "I beg that you will not give it a further mention. Seriously, I do not think I am fit for the Presidency."

He sent a letter, radical in its defence of the Declaration of Independence, to a committee in Boston which had invited him to speak at a Jefferson dinner on April 6. Lincoln wrote: "Soberly, it is now no child's play to save the principles of Jefferson from total overthrow in this nation. The principles of Jefferson are the definitions and axioms of free society. And yet they are denied and evaded, with no small show of success. One dashingly calls them 'glittering generalities.' Another bluntly calls them 'self-evident lies.' And others insidiously argue that they apply only to 'superior races.' These expressions, differing in form, are identical in object and effect—the supplanting of the principles of free government and restoring those of classification, caste, and legitimacy. They would delight a convoca-

tion of crowned heads plotting against the people. They are the vanguard—the miners and sappers of returning despotism. We must repulse them, or they will subjugate us. This is a world of compensation; and he who would be no slave must consent to have no slave. Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves; and, under a just God, cannot long retain it."

Under the head of "Our Next President," J. W. Scroggs published in the *Central Illinois Gazette* at Champaign a paragraph: "We had the pleasure of introducing to the hospitalities of our sanctum a few days ago the Hon. Abraham Lincoln. Few men can make an hour pass away more agreeably. We do not pretend to know whether Mr. Lincoln will ever condescend to occupy the White House or not, but if he should, it is a comfort to know that he has established for himself a character and reputation of sufficient strength and purity to withstand the disreputable and corrupting influences of even that locality."

Then, under the subhead, "Who Will Be President?" the editor went over practically the same points that Jesse Fell had presented to Lincoln, and, under the final subhead "Abraham Lincoln," declared, "We, in Illinois, know him well, in the best sense of the word, a true democrat, a man of the people, whose strongest friends and supporters are the hard-handed and strong-limbed laboring men, who hail him as a brother and look upon him as one of their real representative men." The *Aurora Beacon* spoke likewise.

Lincoln himself was not committed as to candidates. He wrote Nathan Sargent in June: "There are as good men in the South as the North; and I guess we will elect one of them if he will allow us to do so on Republican ground. For my single self I would be willing to risk some Southern man without a platform."

Writing to the Indiana congressman, Schuyler Colfax, "for your eye only," he outlined dangers, and suggested the safe course. "The movement against foreigners in Massachusetts; in New Hampshire to make obedience to the Fugitive Slave Law punish-

able as a crime; in Ohio to repeal the Fugitive Slave Law; and 'squatter sovereignty' in Kansas. In these things there is explosive matter enough to blow up half a dozen national conventions, if it gets into them; and what gets very rife outside of conventions is very likely to find its way into them. What is desirable, if possible, is that in every local convocation of Republicans a point should be made to avoid everything which will disturb Republicans elsewhere." Massachusetts Republicans "should have looked beyond their noses." Likewise Ohio, New Hampshire, and Kansas Republicans.

Calls for Lincoln to speak, as the foremost Republican figure of the West, were coming from Kansas, Buffalo, Des Moines, Pittsburgh. Thurlow Weed, the New York boss, wired to Illinois, "Send Abraham Lincoln to Albany immediately."

Long John Wentworth, editor of the *Chicago Democrat,* a Republican paper, saw Lincoln looming, and told him he "needed somebody to run him"; in New York Seward had Weed to run him. Lincoln took a laugh for himself and remarked, "Only events can make a President."

He was at a governor's reception in Springfield, wore a gloomy face as he finished a dance with Mrs. E. M. Haines, and remarked that he was fifty years old. Then he braced himself, brightened, and added, "But, Mrs. Haines, I feel that I am good for another fifty years yet."

Chapter 124

LINCOLN was past fifty years of age, a seasoned and hardened player in the great American game of politics, the national sport of watching candidates and betting on who would win or arguing as to which was right or wrong. Without the cunning of a fox, without a wilderness sagacity, without natural instincts such as those guiding wild geese on thousand-mile flights, he would have gone down and under in stalking a presidential nomination.

Outside of himself and Theodore Canisius hardly any one in

Springfield or Illinois knew that Lincoln was the owner of the German language newspaper, the *Illinois Staats-Anzeiger.* Canisius, the editor, had run into debt, and his landlord John Burkhardt took over the newspaper property and sold it to Lincoln through Canisius for $400.

Lincoln drew up a contract which he and Canisius signed. The type, press, and other equipment were declared to be the property of Lincoln, the contract read, and Canisius was free to use the property to publish a Republican newspaper in the German language with occasional articles in English.

Any time the newspaper should fail to operate as a faithful Republican mouthpiece and organ, Lincoln could take over his property and Canisius would move out; thus the contract written on legal cap paper dated May 30, 1859.

So it happened that while the leading German newspaper of Illinois, the *Chicago Staats-Zeitung,* was for Seward for President, Lincoln was the owner of a German newspaper downstate and could walk into its office, ask for favors and get consideration. Furthermore, he had kept a live political asset from falling into Democratic hands and served his party to that extent in the close fighting for control of the Northwest.

In taking possession of a printing plant and newspaper he had been "Honest Abe," with a still tongue. Not even Herndon was told, nor Swett nor Whitney nor Bunn the banker. Canisius, the editor, looked like the proprietor of the *Illinois Staats-Anzeiger* and walked the streets of Springfield as such. Lincoln had plenty else to do.

Enemies and events set traps for his feet. Friends and party workers made mistakes. Sometimes he stopped what seemed to him to be a mistake in the making. This was the case in June of 1859 when he wrote to Salmon P. Chase, the Republican governor of Ohio, to watch out or the national Republican party would look like a steamboat with the boilers blown up.

Chase and others were considering a move to have the Republican party take a stand against the Federal Fugitive Slave Law and declare for its repeal. Lincoln wrote to Chase, as one lawyer

to another, a lengthy, dry paragraph on the Constitution and the Fugitive Slave Law, and then, as one politician to another, wrote for Chase the warning that the proposed move would wreck the party. "I did not write you with any view of discussing the Constitutional question. My only object was to impress you with what I believe is true, that the introduction of a proposition for repeal of the Fugitive Slave Law, into the next Republican National Convention, will explode the convention and the party." That was all he had to tell Chase. He closed, "Having turned your attention to the point, I wish to do no more." He knew that would be enough. There was a flicker of Lincoln humor in the handling of Chase, a dignified and handsome crusader who wanted to be President, and who was ranked close to Seward in the general guessing as to whom the Republicans would nominate the next year.

In northern Ohio the Fugitive Slave Law, so correctly, so absolutely, and so solemnly vouched for by the Federal Supreme Court as constitutional and American, had become a joke. State's attorneys, working earnestly, found it hard in a clear case of guilt to put an Abolitionist in jail and keep him there. Public opinion was getting tumultuous. Thousands of good men who didn't care a hoot one way or another about slavery—it was too far off to bother them—were dead set against a law that declared them criminals if they lifted a finger or spoke in a whisper to help a runaway black man. And as plans were getting under way for the realization that year of the Daily Overland Mail between the boundaries of Missouri and San Francisco, Jefferson Davis, the Mississippi senator, was declaring that Congress must protect slavery in the territories crossed by the Daily Overland Mail. Ideas and necessities snarled and showed their teeth.

Lincoln came into southern Ohio, in September, called to make speeches to help the Republicans in the state campaign. At Columbus, David R. Locke, the newspaper man, asked him why he went out of his way to go on record as favoring the Illinois law forbidding intermarriage of whites and negroes, and he remarked: "The law means nothing. I shall never marry a negress,

but I have no objection to any one else doing so. If a white man wants to marry a negro woman, let him do it—if the negro woman can stand it." Public discussion was helping to doom slavery, he told Locke. "What kills the skunk is the publicity it gives itself. What a skunk wants to do is to keep snug under the barn—in the daytime, when men are around with shotguns." He opened his Columbus speech with an apology that he wasn't so great a speaker as they were used to hearing, answered a newspaper story that he had declared in favor of negro suffrage, and then took up the latest arguments of Douglas, who had been saying that as between the negro and the white man he would go for the white man.

This view, Lincoln held, was "a matter of dollars and cents, a sort of question how they shall deal with brutes." It was getting ready for legalizing the hauling of negroes from Africa to the southern states for the purposes of slavery. "If public sentiment has not been debauched already to this point, a new turn of the screw in that direction is all that is wanting. You need but one or two turns further until your minds, now ripening under these teachings, will be ready for all these things." The spread of slavery was the only thing that ever had threatened the Union. Speaking the next day in Cincinnati, he declared: "We must prevent the outspreading of the institution. We must prevent the revival of the African slave trade, and the enacting by Congress of a Territorial slave code. We must prevent each of these things being done by either congresses or courts." He went so far as to say, "The people of these United States are the rightful masters of both congresses and courts, not to overthrow the Constitution, but to overthrow the men who pervert the Constitution."

Addressing the Kentuckians particularly, he said: "We mean to remember that you are as good as we; that there is no difference between us other than the difference of circumstances. We mean to recognize and bear in mind always that you have as good hearts in your bosoms as other people, or as we claim to have, and treat you accordingly. We mean to marry your girls

when we have a chance—the white ones, I mean—and I have the honor to inform you that I once did have a chance in that way." An interruption came when he said, "I often hear it intimated that you mean to divide the Union whenever a Republican or anything like it is elected President of the United States." A Douglas man called out, "That is so." To which flashed Lincoln's reply: "Well, then, I want to know what you are going to do with your half of it. Are you going to split the Ohio down through, and push your half off a piece? Or are you going to keep it right alongside of us outrageous fellows? Or are you going to build up a wall some way between your country and ours, by which that movable property of yours can't come over here any more, to the danger of your losing it."

He kept on with pointed questions. "Do you think you can better yourselves on that subject by leaving us here under no obligation whatever to return those specimens of your movable property that come hither? When we cease to be under obligation to do anything for you, how much better off do you think you will be? Will you make war upon us and kill us all? Why, gentlemen, I think you are as gallant and as brave men as live; that you can fight as bravely in a good cause, man for man, as any other people living; that you have shown yourselves capable of this upon various occasions; but man for man, you are not better than we are, and there are not so many of you as there are of us. You will never make much of a hand at whipping us. If we were fewer in numbers than you, I think that you could whip us; if we were equal it would likely be a drawn battle; but being inferior in numbers, you will make nothing by attempting to master us. But perhaps I have addressed myself as long or longer to the Kentuckians than I ought to have done, inasmuch as I have said that whatever course you take, we intend in the end to beat you."

He was a veteran stump orator, aiming to "soak them with facts." A groan, "Oh, Lord!" came from somewhere in the crowd at one point. Lincoln caught it. "That is my Kentuckian I am talking to now." Another hearer called, "Speak to Ohio

men and not to Kentuckians." To which flashed the rejoinder, "I beg permission to speak as I please." And as he took out his spectacles to read a quotation, some one called, "Put on your specs." The polite answer, "Yes, sir, I am obliged to do so. I am no longer a young man."

At Dayton, he sat for a daguerreotype, and a young man came in and began painting a portrait of him. "Keep on," he told the artist. "You may make a good one, but never a pretty one." He found personal compliments in the Dayton *Daily Empire,* a Democratic paper, commenting on his speech: "Mr. Lincoln is a very seductive speaker, and his address, although a network of fallacies and false assumptions throughout, was calculated to deceive any man, who would not pay very close attention to the subject, and keep continually on guard."

Then he went back to Springfield to the law office whose walls and bookcases he was seeing so seldom now. In a cleaning of the office one day it was found that plants had sprouted up from the dirt in one corner. They were Government seeds Congressman Lincoln had sent ten years back.

A new student, Littlefield, was digging into Blackstone and Kent. On the big table rested the feet of the new student and of the junior and senior partner—three pairs of feet. And Herndon remarked, "We ought to concentrate enough magnetism, in this way, to run a whole courtroom."

But one day in October the telegraph wires and newspapers hummed with news that none of them read with his feet on the table.

Chapter 125

Abolitionists had been writing, talking, singing, praying, for thirty years; Garrison had publicly burned a copy of the Constitution of the United States, calling it a covenant with hell; Henry Ward Beecher had held mock auctions of slave women in his Brooklyn church; "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was selling in edi-

tions of hundreds of thousands of copies; of writing, talking, singing, praying, there had been much. In hundreds of runaway-slave cases in the North there had been little or big riots and clashes; in Kansas had been civil war and terrorism.

Out of Kansas came a man who stole horses, ran slaves to freedom, and for the sake of retaliation and terror burned barns, stole horses, and killed men without trial or hearing. Asked why he had killed young people, he answered, "Nits grow to be lice." He had come to Kansas from Ohio and New York, a child of Mayflower Pilgrim Fathers; two of his grandfathers fought in the Revolutionary War; at his house his nineteen children had partaken in prayers and Scripture readings morning and night as they were raised up in his solemn household. As he mixed with the Abolitionists of the eastern states, he told them action was wanted, bold deeds; not a Moses giving laws nor a Jeremiah with lamentations but a Samson not afraid to pull down a temple if it brought his own death; a lesson could be taken from Joshua, whose Ram's Horn brought down the walls of Jericho. "One man and God can overturn the universe," he said often.

He was through with talk. Some agreed with him. The thousands of dollars he wanted for rifles, pikes, wagons, and stores were given to him by wealthy and respectable citizens who secretly agreed to call the affair a "speculation in wool," and spoke and wrote to each other asking, "How is our speculation in wool getting along?"

On Monday, October 17, 1859, telegraph dispatches to all parts of the United States carried terror, strange news. At the junction of the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers, where the states of Virginia and Maryland touch borders, in a rocky little town called Harpers Ferry, the telegraph wires had been cut, a United States Government arsenal and rifle factory captured, the gates broken and the watchmen made prisoners, Virginia slaveholders taken prisoners and locked up and their slaves told they were free and should spread the word of freedom to all slaves everywhere.

All of this happened between Sunday night and Monday daybreak. America shivered that Monday as the news spread. It was a Monday of mystery. What was happening? Was a slave revolt starting? Would the next news tell of rebellious slaves repeating the Nat Turner insurrection on a far wider scale, with a list of men, women, and children butchered in their looted or burned homes? The country breathed easier on Tuesday when Colonel Robert E. Lee, commanding eighty marines, rushed a little engine-house fort where eighteen little men inside had fought till all were dead or wounded except two.

In a corner of the engine house, they found an old man with a flowing long beard who said his name was John Brown. "Who sent you here?" they asked. "No man sent me here. It was my own prompting and that of my Maker, or that of the devil, whichever you please. I acknowledge no man in human form." "What was your object in coming?" "I came to free the slaves." "And you think you were acting righteously?" "Yes, I think, my friends, you are guilty of a great wrong against God and humanity. I think it right to interfere with you to free those you hold in bondage. I hold that the Golden Rule applies to the slaves too."

"And do you mean to say you believe in the Bible?" "Certainly I do." "Don't you know you are a seditionist, a traitor, and that you have taken up arms against the United States Government?" "I was trying to free the slaves. I have tried moral suasion for this purpose, but I don't think the people in the slave states will ever be convinced they are wrong." "You are mad and fanatical." "And I think you people of the South are mad and fanatical. Is it sane to keep five million men in slavery? Is it sane to think such a system can last? Is it sane to suppress all who would speak against this system, and to murder all who would interfere with it? Is it sane to talk of war rather than give it up?"

The state of Virginia gave him a fair trial on charges of murder, treason, and inciting slaves to rebellion; northern friends gave him able lawyers; he was found guilty; a judge pronounced

the words, he must hang by the neck till he was dead, dead, dead.

And he looked the judge in the eye and spoke calmly, as though he had thought it all out long ago, and as though he might be speaking to America and to the world and to unborn generations. "Had I taken up arms in behalf of the rich, the powerful, the intelligent, the so-called great, or in behalf of any of their friends, or any of their class, every man in this court would have deemed it an act worthy of reward rather than of punishment. But the Court acknowledges the validity of the law of God. I see a book kissed here which is the Bible, and which teaches me that all things that I would have men do unto me, so must I do unto them. I endeavored to act up to that instruction. I fought for the poor; and I say it was right, for they are as good as any of you; God is no respecter of persons. I believe that to have interfered in behalf of His despised poor, I did no wrong, but right. Now, if it be deemed necessary that I should forfeit my life for the furtherance of the ends of justice, and mingle my blood further with the blood of my children, and with the blood of millions in this slave country whose rights are disregarded by wicked, cruel, and unjust enactments, I say, let it be done."

Word came from friends who planned to steal him away from the death watch. He sent back word he would be more useful to freedom when dead. He knew he could show men how to die for freedom, without a quaver or a flicker of fear. Afterward his ghost would come back and walk over the earth and tease at men's hearts with questions about freedom and justice and God. He would be a memory among young men. It is the young who count. For himself, he was fifty-nine years old, but the average age of those who had captured Harpers Ferry with him, and flamed in a scarlet deed before the world, was twenty-five years and five months.

Yes, he would go to his hanging. He would write a last message; before going to the noose he would hand another prisoner a scrap of paper with the writing: "I, John Brown, am now quite certain that the crimes of this guilty land will never be

purged away but with blood. I had, as I now think, vainly flattered myself that without much bloodshed it might be done."

On the day of his doom, the Shenandoah Valley was swept and garnished by sky and weather; beyond the three thousand guardsmen with rifles and bayonets, he could see blue haze and a shining sun over the Blue Ridge Mountains. "This *is* a beautiful country; I never had the pleasure of really seeing it before." And he may have thought he had missed many other Shenandoahs of life, shining valleys that would have lighted him into pronouncing the word "beautiful" wistfully. Yet he was not a wistful man. He was a man of doom, believing in his own right to doom others, and the power of God to doom wrongdoers everlastingly.

Speaking through his bars, he had told one, "All our actions, even all the follies that led to this disaster, were decreed to happen ages before the world was made." It was all settled for him, so long before, and he was only walking as God had ages ago foreordained that he should walk. The sheriff asked, "Shall I give you the signal when the trap is to be sprung?" "No, no," came the even voice from the white beard. "Just get it over quickly."

What John Brown had believed came true; his ghost did walk. The governor of Virginia, the jailer who had kept him in the lock-up, talked about the way he died, without a quaver or a flicker, cool, serene; he died as great Virginians had died; he was an artist at dying. Emerson, Thoreau, Victor Hugo compared him to Christ, to Socrates, the great martyrs who had met death finely. Wendell Phillips said, "The lesson of the hour is insurrection." The Abolitionists shouted hallelujahs. The anti-slavery men had regrets; they knew the South was lashed and would retaliate.

Stephen A. Douglas called for a law to punish conspiracies, quoting Lincoln's House Divided speech and Seward's Irrepressible Conflict speech to indicate that Republican politicians and their "revolutionary doctrines" had incited John Brown.

Lincoln spoke at Troy, Kansas, on December 2, the day Brown

was hanged, and made an appeal to southern sympathizers. "Old John Brown thought slavery was wrong, as we do; he attacked slavery contrary to law, and it availed him nothing before the law that he thought himself right. He has just been hanged for treason against the state of Virginia; and we cannot object, though he agreed with us in calling slavery wrong. Now if you undertake to destroy the Union contrary to law, if you commit treason against the United States, our duty will be to deal with you as John Brown has been dealt with. We shall try to do our duty."

Chapter 126

THE plunge of John Brown into the darker valley beyond the Shenandoah kept echoing. Sweet Louisa Alcott referred to him as "Saint John the Just," and Longfellow whispered to his diary that the hanging of Brown marked "the day of a new revolution, quite as much needed as the old one." Brown had been so calmly and religiously glad to be hanged publicly, before all men and nations, that he could not be dismissed lightly from the thoughts of men. Even those who agreed with Douglas, speaking in the Senate, that Brown was a horse thief and a murderer, were puzzled at the old man writing to his family, "A calm peace seems to fill my mind by day and by night," and to a clergyman: "Let them hang me; I forgive them, and may God forgive them, for they know not what they do."

The governor of Virginia, in a Richmond speech, said: "Brown is a bundle of the best nerves I ever saw, cut and thrust, bleeding and in bonds. He is a man of clear head, of courage, fortitude. He is a fanatic, vain and garrulous, but firm and truthful and intelligent." And to Emerson, the governor of Virginia seemed to be a "superior man." He commented: "As they confer, they understand each other swiftly; each respects the other. If opportunity allowed, they would prefer each other's society and desert their former companions."

"Crazy" was the word for Brown, said many. A Boston lawyer at a Democratic convention said Brown had aimed at "getting up a social revolution and civil war" in Virginia. Not only that, but "this traitor and murderer finds two sets of sympathizers in the northern states—one set who say that his plans and arts were so stupidly criminal, and so criminally stupid, that he must have been crazy, and should therefore go unpunished —and another set who, moved by their own crazy false estimation of the moral quality of his acts, proceed to claim and honor him as a hero, a saint, and a god." A plea of insanity had been made for Brown in the trial court; in his mother's family there had been insanity, and a dozen cases were known in his near and distant kin. For himself, he had said: "I may be very insane, and I am so, if insane at all. But if that be so insanity is very like a pleasant dream." To which he added: "If I am insane, of course I should think I know more than all the rest of the world. But I do not think so."

The solving of John Brown as a personality was not easy. He became a ghost, a haunting challenge. Five of his supporters crossed to the Canadian border for safety. His chief financial backer, Gerrit Smith, broke down in fear of indictment and social disgrace under "a troop of hallucinations" and was taken to the Utica, New York, Asylum for the Insane. Nine weeks previous, Smith had written: "For insurrection then we may look any year, any month, any day. A terrible remedy for a terrible wrong!" At that time he knew Brown's plans, except as to the place where the interference was to begin, and he had written publicly: "Is it entirely certain that these [slave] insurrections will be put down promptly, and before they can spread far? Remember that telegraphs and railroads can be rendered useless in an hour. Remember, too, that many who would be glad to face the insurgents would be busy in transporting their wives and daughters to places where they would be safe from that worst fate which husbands and fathers can imagine for their wives and daughters."

All national politics was colored by the John Brown adventure.

The *New York Herald* published, side by side with the news from Harpers Ferry, the speech, in full, of Senator William H. Seward in which he prophesied "the irrepressible conflict." Seward offered explanations in a Senate speech; he was opposed to conspiracy, ambush, invasion, and force as shown by Brown; he favored reason, suffrage, and the spirit of the Christian religion. Yet his explanations could not wash off from him the radical stripes. He knew, as Lincoln out in Illinois knew, that Seward as a candidate for the Republican nomination had been hard hit. Jesse Fell and Judge David Davis worked steadily on their plans to nominate their dark horse in the coming month of May.

It interested Lincoln that his Ohio friend, and old boarding-house messmate in Washington, Joshua R. Giddings, had entertained John Brown at his house, and was called to testify, and was examined by Jefferson Davis. "Will you explain the meaning of the higher law?" Jefferson Davis queried. "I will do so with great pleasure," replied Giddings. "What I mean by the higher law is that power which for the last two centuries has been proclaimed by the philosophers and jurists and statesmen of Germany, Europe, and the United States—called, in other words, the law of nature—by which we suppose that God, in giving man his existence, gave him the right to enjoy the light of the sun; to drink the waters of the earth; to unfold his moral nature; to learn the laws that control his moral and physical being; to bring himself into harmony with those laws." And when Giddings had rambled far into the limpid streams of his philosophy of the higher law, Jefferson Davis reminded him: "The question was which law was to be regarded, if they came in conflict: the laws of the country, or the higher law to which you have alluded?" "Permit me to explain," promply came Joshua Giddings's reply. "There can be no *law* which invades the right of any human being to life, liberty, and happiness. The mandate of the enactment has none of the elements of law; it is a mere command to violate God's will or the laws of nature. I make this as an explanation."

Also it interested Lincoln that testimony showed a fund of $20,000 had been raised by Illinois Abolitionists for use in the civil war in Kansas. This was the fund to which Lincoln had subscribed only on condition that Judge Stephen T. Logan, of the Springfield bar, should decide that Kansas was unconstitutionally invaded by armed forces that could not be dealt with by the legal government of Kansas. It was the fund Lincoln had argued Herndon and others out of signing with their subscriptions.

Lincoln, on his Kansas trip, spoke in towns on the civil-war border between people who called each other "Border Ruffians" and "Nigger Thieves"; he battered away at Douglas, rolling the words in mentioning Douglas's "gur-reat pur-rinciple" of popular sovereignty. Politely and decently, he recited sad political history. "Last year, as you know, we Republicans in Illinois were advised by numerous and respectable outsiders to reëlect Douglas to the Senate by our votes." He had not questioned the motives of such advisers nor their devotion to the Republican party. But, "Had we followed the advice, there would now be no Republican party in Illinois, and none to speak of anywhere else. The whole thing would now be floundering along after Douglas upon the Dred Scott and crocodile theory. It would have been the grandest 'haul' for slavery ever yet made. Our principles would still live, and ere long would produce a party; but we should have lost all our past labor and twenty years of time by the folly."

As he was riding in a one-horse open buggy across prairie thirty miles from St. Joseph, he met a two-horse wagon traveling eastward. A man wearing corduroys, and a full face of whiskers, in the eastbound wagon, called Lincoln's name and greeted him. Lincoln got out of his buggy, shook hands warmly with the stranger, and searched for the face behind the whiskers. "Don't you know me?" came the voice. "I'm Henry Villard." They two had sat in a box car waiting, through a rain, for a train at Petersburg, Illinois, the year before. Lincoln laughed. "Why, good gracious! you look like a real Pike's Peaker." Villard had

been to Colorado reporting for his newspaper on the gold and silver prospects there. He noticed Lincoln shivering with the cold; a raw northwest wind was cutting through the short overcoat that left the legs mostly without cover. Villard offered Lincoln a buffalo robe, which Lincoln took with a promise to send it back. They chatted on the cold, open prairie ten minutes and went their ways—to meet again farther east.

Among the rolling gray grasses of Kansas in early winter, where lavender and silver-gray mixed on the horizons with cottonwood trees lost at the sky-line edge, Lincoln felt how young the country was, how it had nothing much more than a future, how its limestone houses, log cabins and sod shanties, were only a beginning. The soil, weather, and people had promise. It was not strange that the emigrants from stony Massachusetts and Connecticut, after arriving, had kept on in their fighting to hold it as free soil. Nor was it strange that the squadrons on horse from Missouri wanted to open it for slaves; it would make a sister slave state to Missouri. The nickname of "Bleeding Kansas" had been earned by two sides visioning the future.

Amid the river bluffs of the Big Muddy, as the great clock of the midnight stars told the hours, Lincoln had his thoughts of men and history. He knew that he had helped, possibly even he alone had accomplished, the holding of the Northwest prairies in the political keeping of people convinced against the spread of chattel slavery. If his life held no more, if he should lose in his dark-horse race for the Presidency of the United States, his years had held a large measure. He had been the Stubborn Man who had erected what in his phrase was "a stumbling-block to tyrants." Against what he termed "numerous and respectable outsiders" he had done this much.

If there had been any stubborn grandeur at all in the life of Lincoln, it was in his explanations of the Declaration of Independence, and his taking the words, "All men are created equal," not only seriously and solemnly but passionately. The simplest words, the shortest statements, the most blunt and direct thoughts he spoke, came from him connected with the shibboleths

and passwords of the Revolutionary War. That war and the beginnings of the American nation were wrong, if those words, "All men are equal," were only phrases intended to fool men into fighting for an illusory cause.

Lincoln explained that Jefferson, Adams, Franklin, and the makers of the American Revolution understood well enough that all men are not equals. A man with so immense a feeling for the comic as Abraham Lincoln would be the first of men to understand that long men and short, fat men and lean, hard men and soft, logical men and emotional men, weak men and strong, are not equal in faculties, dimensions, capacities. The accent and stress was to be on opportunity, on equal chance, equal access to the resources of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. To give men this equal chance in life was the aim, the hope, the flair of glory, spoken by the Declaration of Independence. The announcement of it was an act in line and color with Jesus of Nazareth's saying, "Be ye perfect," to people so born that they could never be perfect in mortal flesh. What then? Well then, the struggle to be perfect. Should not a young republic, a nation starting on its path of life, have a glorious and impossible ideal of perfection? So the thought of the makers of the American Revolution was that they would set up a standard a measure of perfection for all nations as well as itself. And this standard or measure, spoken to the world boldly, hopefully, almost comically and quixotically, would be "a stumbling-block to tyrants for all time to come."

In that phrase was an approach to the bottom philosophy of politics that shaped the watchwords and actions of Lincoln. That it paid him politically in support from new American voters from Europe, and in support from antislavery and free-soil voters, who believed in the Declaration of Independence brand of equality, was a factor he reckoned with. He was a gatherer of votes with a keen eye for practical values. But it seemed that he phrased and thrust forth this very ideal of equality in such a way that it took on new meanings even for those who had long been thoughtful about the Declaration of Independence.

He was their thinker and spokesman. He knew what they wanted more deeply and thoroughly, more tragically and quizzically, than they knew it themselves. He made them believe that he counted the political genius and social control of the masses of people worth more in the long run than the assumptions of those who secretly will not trust the people at all. He gained and held power, votes, friends, in many and far unknown corners and byways, because he threw some strange accent into the pronounciation of the words, "The People." He made them feel he and his like were "stumbling-blocks to tyrants."

He had arrived at a sense of history. He looked into the sunburned faces of Kansans and said: "Our principle, however baffled or delayed, will finally triumph, I do not permit myself to doubt Men will pass away—die, die politically and naturally; but the principle will live and live forever. Organizations rallied around that principle may, by their own dereliction, go to pieces, thereby losing all their time and labor; but the principle will remain, and will reproduce another, and another, till the final triumph will come."

An old legend was sometimes in his heart. "An eastern monarch once charged his wise men to invent him a sentence to be ever in view, and which should be true and appropriate in all times and situations. They presented him the words, 'And this too shall pass away.'" He had told that to his Cincinnati audience in the autumn, commenting: "How much it expresses! How chastening in the hour of pride! How consoling in the depths of affliction! 'And this too shall pass away!'" It was almost too desperate. He added: "And yet, let us hope it is not quite true. Let us hope, rather, that by the best cultivation of the physical world beneath and around us, and the intellectual and moral world within us, we shall secure an individual, social, and political prosperity, whose course shall be onward and upward, and which, while the earth endures, shall not pass away."

Chapter 127

LINCOLN was busy writing in the winter weeks of late 1859 and early 1860. The Young Men's Central Republican Union of New York City had asked him to be its final speaker in a course of lectures on political subjects. He was to lecture on February 27 in Cooper Institute, and he would have the chance to tell the country what was wrong and what he would do about it. So, he was writing a speech.

In the year just past he had traversed the western frontier. He had stood in Council Bluffs, Iowa, and told a man, "Not one, but many roads, will some day center here." The youth of the country, the feel of its future, was in his bones.

The winter winds blew around the public square in Springfield; he wrote his view of the Harpers Ferry blow-up. Slave insurrections couldn't be blamed on the young Republican party; twenty-three years before in the Nat Turner revolt three times as many lives were lost as at Harpers Ferry. "In the present state of things in the United States, I do not think a general or even a very extensive slave insurrection is possible. The slaves have no means of rapid communication; nor can incendiary freemen, black or white, supply it. The explosive materials are everywhere in parcels; but there neither are nor can be supplied the indispensable connecting trains. Much is said by southern people about the affection of slaves for their masters and mistresses; and a part of it, at least, is true."

A plot for an uprising could scarcely be devised and communicated to twenty individuals before some one of them, to save the life of a favorite master or mistress, would divulge it. This was the rule, proven among the blacks in Haiti and among the whites in the gunpowder plot of British history. "Occasional poisonings from the kitchen, and open or stealthy assassinations in the field, and local revolts extending to a score or so, will continue to occur as the natural results of slavery; but no general insurrection of slaves, as I think, can happen in this country for

a long time. Whoever much fears or much hopes for such an event, will be alike disappointed."

As to John Brown, his effort was "peculiar." It was not a slave insurrection. "It was an attempt by white men to get up a revolt among slaves, in which the slaves refused to participate. In fact, it was so absurd that the slaves, with all their ignorance, saw plainly enough it could not succeed. That affair, in its philosophy, corresponds with the many attempts related in history, at the assassination of kings and emperors. An enthusiast broods over the oppression of a people till he fancies himself commissioned by Heaven to liberate them. He ventures the attempt, which ends in little else than his own execution."

Just before Christmas that winter Lincoln gave Jesse Fell a short story of his life, an autobiography. His father and mother were born in Virginia, he wrote, of "undistinguished parents," and then, feeling that "undistinguished" was too stiff and stylish and might not be understood, he added in his revision that his father and mother came from "second families, perhaps I should say." Indiana, where he grew up, "was a wild region, with many bears and other wild animals still in the woods."

He explained his schooling so there would be no mistake about it. "There were some schools, so called, but no qualification was ever required of a teacher beyond 'readin', writin', and cipherin' " to the rule of three. If a straggler supposed to understand Latin happened to sojourn in the neighborhood he was looked upon as a wizard. There was absolutely nothing to excite ambition for education."

And, writing as a dark-horse candidate for the Republican presidential nomination, he wrote: "Of course, when I came of age I did not know much. Still, somehow, I could read, write, and cipher to the rule of three; but that was all. I have not been to school since. The little advance I now have upon this store of education I have picked up from time to time under the pressure of necessity." His own drawl was in the scribbling of, "I was raised to farm work," and after various items he closed,

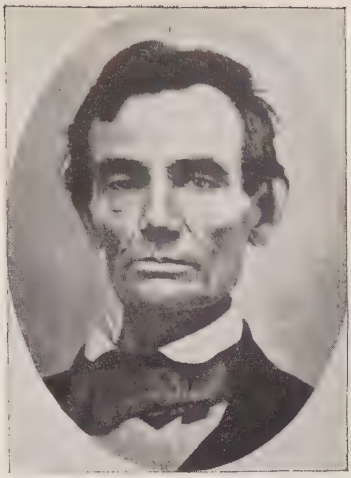
saying he had a "dark complexion, with coarse black hair and gray eyes. No other marks or brands recollected."

In the letter sending the sketch to Fell, he noted, "There is not much of it, for the reason, I suppose, that there is not much of me." He had written the facts, for others to use. He furnished the material—for others to use. "Of course, it must not appear to have been written by myself."

To Alexander Stephens, of Georgia, he wrote with closing sentences: "This is the longest letter I ever dictated or wrote. But this is to only you alone, not to the public." It was the argument of one friendly lawyer to another. He rehearsed American history of colonial days and concluded, "All of the States' Rights which they [the colonies] wished to retain are now and forever retained in the Union, including slavery; and so I have sworn loyalty to this Constitutional Union, and for it let me live or let me die. But you say that slavery is the cornerstone of the South and if separated would be that of a new Republic; God forbid. When a boy I went to New Orleans on a flatboat and there I saw slavery and slave markets as I have never seen them in Kentucky, and I heard worse of the Red River plantations."

He had hoped and prayed that the gradual emancipation plan of Henry Clay or the Liberian colonization scheme of John Quincy Adams would work out. "Your uncle, Justice Grier of the Supreme Bench, has recently expounded the Supreme Law as I honestly accept it." And finally: "In your Oxford College orations, you say, 'I love the Union and revere its memories; I rejoice in all its achievements in arts, in letters, and in arms.' If it is a good thing, why not just keep it and say no more about it?"

Letters came asking him to explain the House Divided speech. Just what did it mean? And he would write that it meant just what it said. He would quote its opening paragraph, and write: "It puzzles me to make my meaning plainer. Look over it carefully, and conclude I meant all I said, and did not mean anything I did not say, and you will have my meaning." And to close,



Lincoln the Lonely Man.

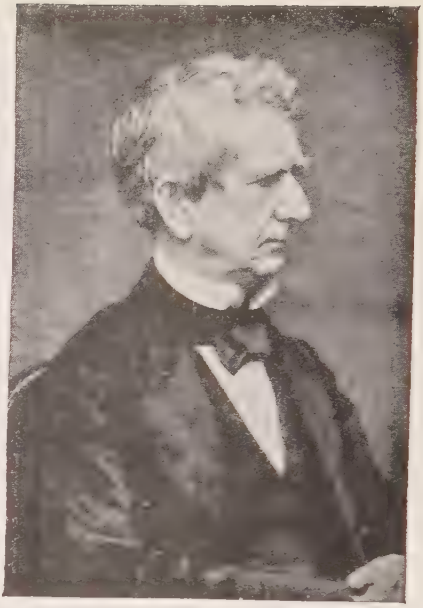
Herndon the Radical

Davis the Conservative

THREE ILLINOIS REPUBLICAN PARTY MEN

Photographs from Frederick H. Meserve Collection

Hannah Armstrong



William H. Seward

Photographs from author's collection

Mr. and Mrs. Norman B. Judd

Photograph from
Chicago Historical Society Collection

"If you will state to me some meaning which you suppose I had, I can and will instantly tell you whether that was my meaning."

Also a letter brought his attention to the tariff question. He had almost forgotten there was a tariff question. "I have not thought much on the subject recently." He said nothing in his reply as to whether he knew of any promises or assurances made by Fell to Pennsylvania iron, steel, and manufacturing interests to the effect that Lincoln would meet their wishes on a protective tariff. He had been an old Henry Clay Tariff Whig. "In old times I made more speeches on that subject than any other. I believe yet, if we could have a moderate, carefully adjusted protective tariff, so far acquiesced in as not to be a perpetual subject of political strife, squabbles, changes, and uncertainties, it would be better for us." To discuss the tariff just then wouldn't be politically healthy. "It is my opinion that just now the revival of that question will not advance the cause itself, or the man who revives it." Having thus been explicit, he indicated: "I should prefer to not now write a public letter on the subject. I therefore wish this to be confidential."

To Norman B. Judd, the Rock Island Railroad general counsel, he wrote about rumors, jealousy, bickering, and skullduggery aimed at splitting friendships among Illinois Republicans. Republican ex-Whigs were suspicious of Republican ex-Democrats. Of a letter from Judd he had to notice: "It has a tone of blame toward myself which I think is not quite just; but I will not stand upon that." He was willing to write a letter to dissatisfied party workers suspicious of Judd, who was one of the anti-Douglas Democrats in the legislature that had elected Trumbull as against Lincoln for United States senator.

"A great difficulty," wrote Lincoln to Judd, "is that they make no distinct charge against you which I can contradict. You did vote for Trumbull against me; and, although I think and have said a thousand times, that was no injustice to me, I cannot change the fact, nor compel people to cease speaking of it. Ever since that matter occurred, I have constantly labored, as I believe you know, to have all recollection of it dropped. The vague

charge that you played me false last year I believe to be false and outrageous; but it seems I can make no impression by expressing that belief." A few days later he sent a letter, to be published if Judd chose, which declared Judd to be loyal in all ways to him, Lincoln, and stated, "I take pleasure in adding that of all the avowed friends I had in the canvass of last year, I do not suspect a single one of having acted treacherously to me or to our cause; and that there is not one of them in whose honor and integrity I have more confidence today than in that of Mr. Judd."

And it seemed that about this time Bill Herndon cut loose with free-spoken opinions; and Lincoln in a letter to Judd remarked: "A day or so before you wrote about Mr. Herndon, Dubois told me that he [Herndon] had been talking to William Jayne in the way you indicate. At first sight afterward, I mentioned it to him; he rather denied the charge, and I did not press him about the past, but got his solemn pledge to say nothing of the sort in the future. I had done this before I received your letter. I impressed upon him as well as I could, first, that such was untrue and unjust to you; and, second, that I would be held responsible for what he said. Let this be private."

Judd was a politician whose slogan Whitney reported to be, "Turn on the beer, boys." Lincoln's connections with Judd kept getting him into trouble. He wrote to Judd in February, referrring to Dole and other dissatisfied old Whigs: "I am not in a position where it would hurt much for me not to be nominated on the national ticket; but I am where it would hurt some for me not to get the Illinois delegates. What I expected when I wrote the letter to Messrs. Dole and others is now happening. Your discomfited assailants are most bitter against me; and they will, for revenge upon me, lay to the Bates egg in the South, and to the Seward egg in the North, and go far toward squeezing me out in the middle with nothing. Can you not help me a little in this matter in your end of the vineyard? I mean this to be private."

Lincoln was moving along now with some of his most important decisions and choices in politics dictated by swift-moving, inevitable circumstances. To Trumbull and all Republicans he had made it clear he would not try for the United States senatorship that year, that he and Trumbull were not rivals. "And yet I would rather have a full term in the Senate than in the Presidency," he wrote to Judd. It was only four years since he had made the "Lost Speech" that had galvanized the new young Republican party into life in Illinois, and only two years since his House Divided speech and the debates with Douglas had set men to saying Lincoln looked like a great man, and was surely a great enough man for Illinois to offer as a candidate for President. Aside from politics, as such, he burned with deep smoldering flames on the commanding issue; he was a fighter.

Yet his favorite poem was still "Oh, Why Should the Spirit of Mortal Be Proud?" and in his bones he knew that to be President of the United States would be to say good-by to some of the sweetest and laziest pleasures of life for him. He could look back and carry farther and finer the thoughts he spoke at the Zachary Taylor memorial: "There is reason for believing that the first intelligence of these nominations [for the Presidency] rather amused than seriously interested him. Yet I should be insincere were I not to confess that, in my opinion, the repeated and steady manifestations in his favor did beget in his mind a laudable ambition to reach the high distinction of the presidential chair. The Presidency, even to the most experienced politicians, is no bed of roses; and General Taylor, like others, found thorns within it. No human being can fill that station and escape censure. . . . What will strongly impress a close observer was his unostentatious, self-sacrificing, long-enduring devotion to his duty. He indulged in no recreations, he visited no places seeking applause; but quietly, as the earth in its orbit, he was always at his post. . . . 'He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.'"

In the North, the South had voices, friends, spokesmen. All of New England, for instance, knew Caleb Cushing, the Boston lawyer and Democratic politician who had been minister to China, brigadier general in the Mexican War, attorney general in the Cabinet of President Pierce, close friend of Jefferson Davis. In thanking Massachusetts Democrats for naming him a delegate to the national convention of their party at Charleston, he declared the northern people were infuriated by Abolitionist propaganda, and, "I say a considerable portion of the people of the northern states are carrying on a systematic *war in disguise* against the southern states." Since the John Brown raid it appeared that Virginia must be secured against invasion from Ohio or any other state as from invasion by England or France.

"If not," said Cushing, "then are the days of the great Union numbered, and then they ought to be numbered. If not, then I say it is the right, nay it is the duty, of the southern states to separate from the northern states, and to form a confederation of their own." He threw out a warning; Republican newspapers poked fun at it; Cushing said that, unless the antislavery agitation was stopped, "it will become all persons in the eastern states to look after the condition of their property, to wind up all great local enterprises, to sell out their bank, railway, and factory stocks, and betake themselves to hoarding gold against the day of disaster, as men were accustomed to do in the troubled countries of India—and then? Why, all history is there to tell us what then; social convulsions, hostile combats in the town streets, predatory guerrilla bands roving up and down the country, shootings and hangings, in a word, that which we have not yet had, but which all other nations have—cruel war, *war at home;* and, in the perspective distance, a man on horseback with a drawn sword in his hand, some Atlantic Cæsar, or Cromwell, or Napoleon; . . . and a line of epauletted emperors to close up the truncated series of the honored Presidents of the United States."

And while the country was sizzling with speeches, epithets, dissensions, anger, self-righteousness, Lincoln worked in the little second-story law office in Springfield, Illinois, going to the State

Library nearly every day, searching the *Congressional Globe*, tracking down details of fact in history, reading clippings he and Herndon had made since 1848 from the *Charleston Mercury, Richmond Enquirer, Louisville Journal*, going through back numbers of the *Southern Literary Messenger*. He wore out the patience of Herndon with writing and rewriting some parts of the speech.

A message came one day from Crittenden, the Kentucky senator. He wrote the answer, "I should not care to be the candidate of a party having as its only platform, 'The Constitution, the Union and the enforcement of the laws.'" And he sketched terrible history in one sentence: "'The Constitution, *as we understand it*, has been the shibboleth of every party or malcontent from the Hartford convention that wanted to secede from slave territory and the 'Blue Light' burners who were in British sympathy in 1812, to John C. Calhoun and the South Carolina nullification." And he swept to the hour. "No law is stronger than is the public sentiment where it is to be enforced. Free speech and discussion and immunity from whip & tar and feathers, seem to be implied by the guarantee to every state of a 'republican form of government.' Try Henry Clay's 'gradual emancipation' scheme now in Kentucky, or to circulate W. L. Garrison's *Liberator* where most men are salivated by the excessive use of the *Charleston Mercury*." It was "an unmeaning platform" Crittenden offered. "Compromises of principles break of their own weight." And to illustrate: "Father told a story of a man in your parts required to give a warrantee bill of sale with a horse. He wrote, 'I warrant him sound in skin and skeleton and without faults or faculties.'"

As the time came for him to go to New York and tell the country what was wrong with it, the *Chicago Tribune* came out for him for President, and he heard more reports from friends working to get the Illinois and Indiana delegations solid, and Pennsylvania on the second ballot in the coming convention. Then he left Springfield for New York as quietly as though he were going to Bloomington or Jacksonville.

In Chicago he walked into the *Tribune* office and talked with Joseph Medill, the publisher, and Charles Ray, editor-in-chief, about how he was going to speak before the most particular and critical audience in New York and would like to have them look over the manuscript of his speech; the ideas and arguments would have to stand as he had written them but he would like them to make notes as to any changes of words or phrases which they believed would improve the speech.

And the publisher and editor of the *Chicago Tribune* read the speech out loud to each other and wrote out words and phrases that would improve the text. "Ray and I buckled down to the delicate task," said Medill afterward. "One read slowly while the other listened attentively, and the reading was frequently interrupted to consider suggested improvements of diction, the insertion of synonyms, or points to render the text smoother or stronger, as it seemed to us. Thus we toiled for some hours, till the revision was completed to our satisfaction, and we returned to the office early next morning to re-examine our work before Lincoln would call for the revised and improved manuscript. When he came in we handed him our numerous notes with the reference places carefully marked on the margins of the pages where each emendation was to be inserted. We turned over the address to him with a self-satisfied feeling that we had considerably bettered the document and enabled it to pass the critical ordeal more triumphantly than otherwise it would. Lincoln thanked us cordially for our trouble, glanced at our notes, told us a funny story or two of which the circumstances reminded him, and took his leave."

Chapter 129

Arriving in New York, Lincoln was told by the lecture committee that he was announced to speak at Cooper Union. In that case, he told the committee, he would have to fix over the manuscript of his speech because he had expected to deliver it

in Beecher's church in Brooklyn. He noticed that the *New York Tribune* described him as "a man of the people, a champion of free labor, of diversified and prosperous industry," and in his speeches there were "clearness and candor of statement, a chivalrous courtesy to opponents, and a broad, genuine humor." He learned for the first time that by giving to one newspaper in New York a copy of his speech it would be set in type and corrected proof "slips" would be sent to the other papers, and he would be sure of his speech being printed without mistakes.

A snowstorm interfered with traffic and Cooper Union had that night an audience that didn't fill all the seats. About 1,500 people had come, some with complimentary tickets, but most of them paying their way at twenty-five cents a head; the door receipts were $367.00. But for all that it was agreed in the *Tribune* office that "since the days of Clay and Webster" there hadn't been a larger assemblage of the "intellect and moral culture" of the city of New York. It included people who had heard Jenny Lind and Adelina Patti warble, who had seen French and Spanish dancers, who had spoken with P. T. Barnum and studied his freaks and monstrosities, who read the newspapers edited by Greeley, Bennett, and Raymond, who believed the undersea cable for instant communication from New York to London would be soon repaired. The pick and flower of New York culture was there. Some had heard of the Black Hawk War; but was Black Hawk an Indian chief or a river? Some had heard vaguely that this Lincoln person had once fought a duel and killed a man out in Illinois; at any rate, he came from a region of corn-fed farmers, steamboat explosions, camp-meeting revivals, political barbecues, boom towns, and repudiated state canal bonds. Also, they knew this Lincoln had been the first man to grapple and give stiff handling to the dramatic and powerful Stephen A. Douglas.

David Dudley Field escorted the speaker to the platform. William Cullen Bryant, editor of the *Evening Post,* author of "Thanatopsis" and "To a Waterfowl," told the audience that Lincoln had won a majority of the votes for the senatorship in

Illinois and that it was the legislative apportionment that gave Douglas the victory. Closing, Bryant said, "I have only, my friends, to pronounce the name of Abraham Lincoln of Illinois [loud cheering], I have only to pronounce his name to secure your profoundest attention."

Below the platform Noah Brooks had been telling other newspaper reporters that he had heard Lincoln speak out in Illinois, and once had heard an old Democrat in an outburst: "He's a dangerous man, I tell you, a dangerous man! He makes you believe what he says in spite of yourself." But as Brooks sized up the crowd and Lincoln, he said to himself: "Old fellow, you won't do; it's all very well for the wild West, but this will never go down in New York."

Then came forward on the platform a tall, gaunt frame of bones on which hung a loose and long, new broadcloth suit of clothes, bought just before leaving Springfield, Illinois, and creased in a satchel all the way on the steam cars to New York. Applause began; the orator smiled, put his left hand in the lapel of his broadcloth coat, and stood so as the greeting slowed down. "Mr. *Cheer*man," he began with the Kentucky tang of dialect. He was slow getting started. There were Republicans who weren't sure whether they should laugh at him or feel sorry for him.

As he got into his speech there came a change. He was telling them something. It was good to hear. It was what they wanted said. He opened with a text from Stephen A. Douglas: "Our fathers, when they framed this government under which we live, understood this question [of slavery] just as well and even better than we do now." He inquired as to who these "fathers" might be. Included among them must be the thirty-nine framers of the original Constitution and the seventy-six members of the Congress who framed the amendments thereto. And he went into a crisscross of roll-calls, quotations, documents in established history connected with the sacred names of early bygone times, to prove "the fathers" were with the Republican party view of slavery and against the Democratic position.

Did any one of "the fathers" ever say that the Federal Government should not have the power to control slavery in the Federal Territories? "I defy any man to show that any one of them ever in his whole life declared that." Search all the historical records, prior to the beginning of the century, and then not only among "the fathers" but with them all other living men. "And they shall not be able to find the evidence of a single man agreeing with them." Of course, he must guard a little against being misunderstood. "I do not mean to say we are bound to follow implicitly in whatever our fathers did. To do so would be to discard all the lights of current experience—to reject all progress, all improvement." He would take all blame for John Brown and Harpers Ferry off the Republican party. And he would speak to the people of the South.

His loose-hung, dangling sleeves were by now forgotten, by himself and by his listeners. At moments he seemed to have drifted out of mind that there was an audience before him; he was sort of talking to himself. In the quiet of some moments the only competing sound was the steady sizzle of the gas-lights burning.

The audience spread before him in a wide quarter-circle. Thick pillars sprang up from floor to ceiling, white trunks, dumb, inhuman. But the wide wedges of faces between were listening. He had thought, practiced, rehearsed for this event. It was different from lecturing in Cook's Hall in Springfield, Illinois.

"His face lights with an inward fire," said Noah Brooks to himself. A *New York World* reporter was making mental notes: "His voice was soft and sympathetic as a girl's . . . not lifted above a tone of average conversation . . . a peculiar naïveté in his manner and voice produced a strange effect on his audience . . . hushed for a moment to a silence like that of the dead."

In swinging from the past to the present, Lincoln said, "And now, if they would listen—as I suppose they will not—I would address a few words to the southern people." Then he became a sad, lost, grim man, dealing in simple words with the terrible

ropes of circumstance that snarled and meshed the two sections of the country.

"The question recurs, What will satisfy them? Simply this: we must not only let them alone, but we must somehow convince them that we do let them alone." What was the nub? "Wrong as we think slavery is, we can yet afford to let it alone where it is, because that much is due to necessity arising from its actual presence in the nation; but can we, while our votes will prevent it, allow it to spread into the national Territories and to overrun us here in the free states? If our sense of duty forbids this, then let us stand by our duty fearlessly and effectively."

To search for middle ground between the right and the wrong would be "vain as the search for a man who should be neither a living man nor a dead man." He finished: "Let us have faith that right makes might; and in that faith let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it."

There were applause, cheers; hats and handkerchiefs went into the air, the speaker's hand was shaken; Noah Brooks, the *Tribune* man, was blurting out, "He's the greatest man since St. Paul"; Brooks scurried away to write: "The tones, the gestures, the kindling eye, and the mirth-provoking look defy the reporter's skill. The vast assemblage frequently rang with cheers and shouts of applause. No man ever before made such an impression on his first appeal to a New York audience."

At the Athenæum Club five or six Republicans gave Lincoln a supper; over the oysters one asked which candidates would be most likely to carry Illinois. The reply was: "Illinois is a peculiar state, in three parts. In northern Illinois, Mr. Seward would have a larger majority than I could get. In middle Illinois I think I could call out a larger vote than Mr. Seward. In southern Illinois, it would make no difference who was the candidate."

The head of the lecture committee, Charles C. Nott, took Lincoln to show him the way to the Astor House. As they walked along the street, Nott saw Lincoln was limping, and asked, "Are you lame, Mr. Lincoln?" No, he wasn't lame;

he had new boots on and they hurt his feet. So they waited for a street car, got on board, and rode to where Nott had to hop off for the nearest way home. He told Lincoln just to keep on riding and the car would take him to the door of the Astor House. And Nott said afterward that as he watched the car go bumping up the street he wasn't sure he had done right to get off; Lincoln looked sad and lonesome like something blown in with the drifts of the snowstorm.

In the morning in the lobby of the Astor, Lincoln saw that four morning papers printed his speech in full, and learned there would be a pamphlet reprint of it. He stayed in New York several days, sizing up "the front door" of the nation. It was a town with sights worth seeing if there was time. From his hotel room it was an easy walk to where, not so long before, the Dead Rabbits and the Bowery Boys had been in a gang fight and put up barricades and fought off the police and held their barricades till state troops arrived. Nor was it far to where Laura Keene, the actress manager, had put on her new successful play, "Our American Cousin."

He heard Beecher give a sermon and, coming away with James A. Briggs, walked past the city post office. Briggs mentioned that it was a dirty, disreputable-looking post office for a city like New York. And he put the question whether Lincoln, if he happened to be elected President, would recommend a million dollars for a new post office. Lincoln answered, "I'll make a note of that." He was taken to the studio of Brady and photographed; as the picture came out he looked satisfied with himself; it wasn't his usual face.

When New York papers carrying the Cooper Union speech arrived in the *Chicago Tribune* office, Medill and Ray were glad to see the compliments paid to Lincoln. "Ray and I plunged eagerly into the report, feeling quite satisfied with the successful effect of the polish we had applied to the address," said Medill in telling about it afterward. "We both got done reading it about the same time. With a sickly sort of smile, Dr. Ray looked at me and remarked, 'Medill, old Abe must have lost out of

the car window all our precious notes, for I don't find a trace of one of them in his published talk here.' I tried to laugh and said, 'This must have been meant for one of his waggish jokes.' " And the publisher and editor promised to keep the joke a secret.

In Springfield, as the train had carried Lincoln away for his eastern trip, the *Illinois State Register,* a Democratic paper, printed a paragraph headed "Significant" with the comment, "The Hon. Abraham Lincoln departs today for Brooklyn under an engagement to deliver a lecture before the Young Men's Association in that city in Beecher's church. Subject: not known. Consideration: $200 and expenses. Object: presidential capital. Effect: disappointment." But on March 7, two weeks later, the *Illinois State Journal,* the Republican daily paper in Springfield, had received the New York papers and published the Cooper Union speech in full, commenting editorially: "The tones, the gestures, the kindling eye, and mirth-provoking look defy the reporter's skill. No man ever before made such an impression on his first appeal to a New York audience."

Senator Seward in Washington didn't exactly like to see the *New York Times* reporting, "There was a very large meeting of Republicans at Cooper Institute last night to listen to that noted political exhorter and prairie orator, Abe Lincoln. The speaker, as soon as he appeared on the platform, was vehemently cheered, and during the delivery of his address frequently applauded." It was this same week that Joseph Medill had sent to his *Chicago Tribune* an editorial showing, from his view, that Lincoln could be elected President that year and Seward couldn't. When Seward read this editorial he took his hat and hunted up Medill. And Medill told a friend: "Seward 'blew me up' tremendously for having disappointed him, and preferring that 'prairie statesman,' as he called Lincoln. He gave me to understand that he was the chief teacher of the principles of the Republican party before Lincoln was known other than as a country lawyer in Illinois."

Chapter 130

Two days after Lincoln's Cooper Union speech, his chief rival, Senator Seward, the man leading all others in the race for the Republican presidential nomination, delivered a speech in the Senate, soothing in tone, so different from his Irrepressible Conflict speech that it drew the criticism he was backing down and phrasing his talk "so as to suit Wall Street." Over the country there was among many of the wealthy and conservative a shifting of view: slaves were property; slave ownership was property ownership; to disturb the right to own slaves might disturb other rights and interfere with the proper conduct of business in general.

In Chicago, Cyrus H. McCormick, the harvesting-machinery manufacturer, had blamed Lincoln's House Divided speech, in part, for the John Brown raid, and in giving $100,000.00 to a Presbyterian theological seminary, McCormick insisted that the pastor of his own church should be the seminary president and an antislavery man ousted. Fitzhugh, the Virginia sociologist, was carrying on his propaganda that free society based on democracy had failed in America as in Europe. In simple words rarely heard in the United States Senate, Wigfall of Texas had said: "I am a plain, blunt-spoken man. We say that man has a right to property in man. We say that slaves are our *property*. We say that it is the duty of every government to protect its property everywhere. If you wish to settle this matter, declare that slaves *are* property, and like all other property entitled to be protected in every quarter of the globe, on land and sea. Say that to us, and then the difficulty is settled." Jefferson Davis was saying, "Slave property is the only private property in the United States specifically recognized in the Constitution and protected by it."

Robert Toombs, the Georgia senator, had spoken to a large and fashionable audience in Tremont Temple, Boston. "The great conflict between capital and labor, under free competition,

has ever been how the earnings of labor shall be divided between them," said Toombs; "and in this division the southern slave has a marked advantage over the English laborer, and is often equal to the free laborer of the North." In the South the slaves were not driven to crime by hunger, while "Lord Ashley's report to the British Parliament, shows that in the capital of that empire, hunger alone daily drives thousands of men and women into the abyss of crimes."

As to marriage relations among slaves, said Toombs: "Fewer children are born out of wedlock among slaves, than in the capitals of two of the most civilized countries of Europe—Austria and France; in the former, one-half of the children are thus born, in the latter more than one-fourth." Further: "The injustice and despotism of England towards Ireland has produced more separation of Irish families than African slavery since its introduction into the United States." No standing armies nor police were required to keep the peace among the southern slaves "while the evidence of discontent and the appliance of force to repress it are everywhere visible among the toiling millions of the earth; even in the northern states of this Union, strikes and mobs, unions and combinations against employers, attest at once the misery and discontent of labor among them."

In the North were nearly four million wage workers; in the South nearly four million slave workers; common labor in the North was being paid from sixty cents to a dollar a day; it was a bare living wage. Toombs suggested that if so many more wage workers crowded into the northern labor market that wages reached a bare subsistence point, then slave labor in the South would automatically be abolished; it would be cheaper for Southern capital to buy wage-earning labor than to invest in slaves. Toombs did not dwell long on this point; he set it up as a little grinning skeleton of economic science and was off to other points.

At the altars of the Hebrew race it was slaveholding priests and patriarchs who received the revelations from the Most High. "The highest forms of ancient civilization and the noblest de-

velopment of the individual man are to be found in the ancient slaveholding commonwealths of Greece and Rome." As to the southern people, he quoted from Edmund Burke: "These people of the southern colonies are much more strongly, and with a higher and more stubborn spirit attached to liberty than those to the northward. Such were all the ancient commonwealths, such were our Gothic ancestors, and such in our day were the Poles; such will be all masters of slaves who are not masters themselves. In such a people the haughtiness of domination combines itself with the spirit of freedom, fortifies it, and renders it invincible." The fourteen states of the South held ten millions of inhabitants, "rich, powerful, educated, moral, refined, prosperous, and happy." Thus Atlanta spoke to Boston.

Old friendships were far past the breaking point. Senator Toombs of Georgia, who had once said of Senator Douglas of Illinois, "There has been but one greater, and he the Apostle Paul," was among those trying to sink the Douglas ship in a bottomless sea.

Friends had to watch close between Senator Douglas and the Indiana Senator Graham N. Fitch to stop a shooting affair. "To-day, in secret session, you offered me an affront so wanton and unprovoked and unjustifiable, that I am obliged to infer it must have been the impulse of a momentary passion and not of deliberate premeditation," Douglas wrote Fitch, who replied that his remarks "certainly were not deliberately premeditated, but they cannot be qualified correctly as the impulse of momentary passion." Douglas replied; Fitch again replied; Douglas sent another note; Fitch likewise, the note closing, "If your explanations are disavowed, my withdrawal must likewise be disavowed." And the battle of the ink bottles ended with Douglas writing: "I am averse to prolonging this controversy after gaining the substance of my demands, but I cannot close without answering to your last note by saying it is immaterial to me upon what you predicate your withdrawal, since I have guarded against any misapprehension of my position."

Edwin A. Pollard of Virginia had just published "Black Dia-

monds," calling for the African slave trade to be made lawful again; then negroes fresh from the jungles could be sold in southern seaports at $100.00 to $150.00 a head. "The poor man might then hope to own a negro; the prices of labor would then be in his reach; he would be a small farmer revolutionizing the character of agriculture in the South; he would at once step up to a respectable station in the social system of the South; and with this he would acquire a practical and dear interest in the general institution of slavery that would constitute its best protection both at home and abroad. He would no longer be a miserable, nondescript cumberer of the soil, scratching the land here and there for a subsistence, living from hand to mouth, or trespassing along the borders of the possessions of the large proprietors. He would be a proprietor himself. He would no longer be the scorn and sport of 'gentlemen of color,' who parade their superiority, rub their well-stuffed black skins, and thank God they are not as he. Of all things I cannot bear to see negro slaves affect superiority over the poor, needy, unsophisticated whites, who form a terribly large proportion of the population of the South."

Pollard could vision steps and advances "toward the rearing of that great Southern Empire, whose seat is eventually to be in Central America, and whose boundaries are to enclose the Gulf of Mexico." Ahead were "magnificent fields of romance" for the South, as he saw its future. "It is an empire founded on military ideas; representing the noble peculiarities of southern civilization; including within its limits the isthmuses of America and the regenerated West Indies; having control of the two dominant staples of the world's commerce—cotton and sugar; possessing the highways of the world's commerce; surpassing all empires of the world's ages in the strength of its geographical position."

Philadelphia newspapers quoted a speech by Senator Herschel V. Johnson of Georgia in their city. "We believe that capital should own labor; is there any doubt that there must be a laboring class everywhere? In all countries and under every

form of social organization there must be a laboring class—a class of men who get their living by the sweat of their brow; and then there must be another class that controls and directs the capital of the country." He pleaded: "Slave property stands upon the same footing as all other descriptions of property."

The South Carolina senator, James H. Hammond, son of a Connecticut Yankee who had emigrated from New England to the South, rose one day to tell his colleagues of the North: "The difference between us is that our slaves are hired for life and well compensated; there is no starvation, no begging, no want of employment. Yours are hired by the day, not cared for, and scantily compensated. Why, you meet more beggars in one day, in any single street of the city of New York than you would meet in a lifetime in the whole South. We do not think that whites should be slaves, either by law or necessity. Our slaves are black, of another and inferior race. They are elevated from a condition in which God first created them, by being made our slaves. None of that race on the whole face of the globe can be compared with the slaves of the South. They are happy, content, unaspiring, and utterly incapable, from intellectual weakness, ever to give any trouble by their aspirations.

"Your slaves are white, of your own race; you are brothers of one blood," Hammond told the North. "They are your equals in natural endowment of intellect, and they feel galled by their degradation. Our slaves do not vote. We give them no political power. Yours do vote; and being the majority, they are the depositaries of all your political power. If they knew the tremendous secret, that the ballot box is stronger than an army of bayonets, and could combine, where would you be? Your society would be reconstructed, your government overthrown, your property divided, not as they have mistakenly attempted to initiate such proceedings by meetings in parks, with arms in their hands, but by the quiet process of the ballot box. You have been making war on us to our very hearthstones. How would you like us to send lecturers or agitators North, to teach

these people this, to aid and assist in combining, and to lead them?"

The Massachusetts senator, Henry Wilson, replied: "Wages in the North are 100 per cent higher than in the South. In the iron mills in Massachusetts, they paid the laborers [1850] $30.00 a month; in South Carolina the workingmen of the same occupation received $15.00. I have lived by daily labor, but I never felt galled by the degradation."

The fresh stream of wage labor arriving in northern states from Europe would have to be met by fresh importations of slave labor from Africa, if the South was to grow and hold its own. Alexander Stephens wrote to J. Henly Smith, correcting a comment on his views: "I certainly meant to say nothing except what is clearly expressed—that was that unless we get immigration from abroad we shall have but few more slave states. This great truth seems to take the people by surprise. Some shrink from it as they would from death. Still it is as true as death."

The facts that the heart and mind had to play on and work with were troubled. It was a proper time for one of the lunatics in a New England asylum to cry out one day that he had hit it, he could solve the slavery question. "Let the niggers be whitewashed."

While the "ultras" and "fire-eaters" of the South called for secession from the Union, the state of Massachusetts ran close to the act of secession in passing a Personal Liberty Bill aimed to stop operation of the Federal Fugitive Slave Law. The Massachusetts Antislavery Society resolved, "We do hereby declare ourselves the enemies of the Constitution, Union, and Government of the United States, and the friends of the new confederacy of states, where there shall be no union with slaveholders."

As the national muddle was getting more muddled, Lincoln made campaign speeches for the Republicans in New England states, and visited his boy, Robert, studying to enter Harvard in a preparatory school at Exeter, New Hampshire. Speaking at Hartford, Connecticut, he discussed property and the property angle of the slavery question. "One-sixth of the population of

the United States are slaves, looked upon as property, as nothing but property. The cash value of these slaves, at a moderate estimate, is two billion dollars. This amount of property value has a vast influence on the minds of its owners, very naturally. The same amount of property would have an equal influence upon us if owned in the North. Human nature is the same—people at the South are the same as those at the North, barring the difference in circumstances. Public opinion is founded, to a great extent, on a property basis. What lessens the value of property is opposed; what enhances its value is favored. Public opinion at the South regards slaves as property, and insists upon treating them like other property. Public opinion settles every question here; any policy to be permanent must have public opinion at the bottom. The property basis will have its weight. The love of property and a consciousness of right and wrong have conflicting places in our organization which often make a man's course seem crooked, his conduct a riddle."

Lincoln knew that these statements of his, with all their delicate shadings of language, and the implication behind them, would unlock many secrets of his own conduct. At New Haven the next day he again made allusions to the property phase of slavery. He pointed to "two thousand millions of dollars invested in this species of property" being a concentrated and immense pecuniary interest that had its influence on the minds of the owners of the property. "The owners of these slaves consider them property. The effect upon the minds of the owners is that of property and nothing else." It carried them into politics "to insist upon all that will favorably affect its value as property, to demand laws and institutions and a public policy that shall increase and secure its value, and make it durable, lasting, and universal. The effect on the minds of the owners is to persuade them that there is no wrong in it." The slaveholder does not like to be called bad names; he struggles within himself and sets about arguing himself into the belief that slavery is right. The property influences his mind.

"The dissenting minister who argued some theological point

with one of the Established Church was met by the reply, 'I can't see it so.' He opened the Bible and pointed him to a passage, but the orthodox minister replied, 'I can't see it so.' Then he showed him a single word. 'Can you see that?' 'Yes, I see it,' was the reply. The dissenter laid a guinea over the word, and asked, 'Do you see it now?' So here."

And with what the New York reporter had called his "kindling eye and mirth-provoking gesture," Lincoln remarked: "Whether the owners of this species of property do really see it as it is, it is not for me to say; but if they do, they see it as it is through two billions of dollars, and that is a pretty thick coating."

Shoe-factory workers were on strike in Connecticut and Massachusetts cities; they said they had the grievance that they couldn't live on wages of $250.00 a year. Douglas had said the strike was caused by "this unfortunate sectional warfare," to which Lincoln replied, "Thank God that we have a system of labor where there can be a strike."

Thus at Hartford. At New Haven, even while still a dark-horse candidate for the Republican presidential nomination, he told the striking shoe-workers: "I do not pretend to know all about the matter. . . . I am glad to see that a system of labor prevails in New England under which laborers can strike when they want to, where they are not obliged to work under all circumstances, and are not tied down and obliged to labor whether you pay them or not! I like a system which lets a man quit when he wants to, and wish it might prevail everywhere. I don't believe in a law to prevent a man from getting rich; it would do more harm than good. So while we do not propose any war upon capital, we do wish to allow the humblest man an equal chance to get rich with everybody else. When one starts poor, as most do in the race of life, free society is such that he knows he can better his condition; he knows that there is no fixed condition of labor for his whole life."

He wanted New England good will, and gave it good will in spreads. He had noticed the stony soil of New England, "and yet where will you find wealthy men so wealthy, and

poverty so rarely in extremity? There is not another such place on earth!" He wished them to believe he was their friend, that he could understand how the toils of life thrust workingmen and their families hither and yon. "I desire that if you [people] get too thick here, and find it hard to better your condition on this soil, you may have a chance to strike out and go somewhere else, where you may not be degraded, nor have your family corrupted by forced rivalry with negro slaves. I want you to have a clean bed and no snakes in it!"

He battered away at Douglas. The one personal target he took shots of argument at, in every speech, was Douglas; the one man standing most in the way of the Republican party was Douglas. It was Douglas who had debauched public opinion on the Declaration of Independence more than any one else. And now "Douglas's new sedition law must be enacted and enforced, suppressing all declarations that slavery is wrong, whether made in politics, in presses, in pulpits, or in private. We must arrest and return their fugitive slaves. So long as we call slavery wrong, whenever a slave runs away they will overlook the obvious fact that he ran because he was oppressed, and declare that he was stolen off. Whenever a master cuts his slaves with the lash, and they cry out under it, he will overlook the obvious fact that the negroes cry out because they are hurt, and insist that they were put up to it by some rascally Abolitionist."

After the strain of facing intellectual and ethical New York at Cooper Union, Lincoln had a good time meeting crowds of Yankee workmen; he let loose his rippling humor in every speech. He referred to a white list got up by southern consumers; they would buy only in the North of those factories and mills considered "fair." A southern senator, Mason, had taken his seat in the Capitol one day in a queer suit of clothes, all made of southern homespun. "Senator Mason has quit buying!" said Lincoln. "To carry out his idea he ought to go barefoot. If that's the plan, they should begin at the foundation, and adopt the well-known 'Georgia costume' of a shirt-collar and a pair of spurs."

The disunionist movement thus far reminded him of a man who had a poor, old, lean, bony, spavined horse, with swollen legs. And the man was asked what he was going to do; the horse seemed to be dying. "Do?" he answered. "I'm going to fat him up; don't you see that I've got him seal-fat as high as the knees?" So with disunion. "They have got the Union dissolved up to the ankle, but no farther."

Some of the slanders on foot were a political "bushwhacking," due to the desperation of the Democrats. "At the Battle of Waterloo when Napoleon's cavalry had charged again and again upon the unbroken squares of British infantry, at last they were giving up the attempt, and going off in disorder, when some of the officers, in mere vexation and complete despair, fired their pistols at those solid squares."

Chapter 131

THE genius of America then was swift, impetuous. "To the stars by hard ways," was written lean on many faces. "Take a chance," was a governing slogan among a million young men interested, after the day's work, in horse races, fights, dances, music, women. "The cowards never started and the weak ones died by the way." The past was, perhaps, to be forgotten, the future to be cherished. Around frontier camp fires a man might laugh of a sudden, "Let's all of us tell our real names." Many even of the unread could understand Bill Green's point: "New Salem neighborhood has no principal citizen; every man there is a principal citizen."

The marvelous lonely men, Edgar Allan Poe and Herman Melville, had come and given their books to America. One had written of "beauty"; the chief of dark adjectives, for him, was the word "beautiful." The other had written "Moby Dick," a heaving, far-flung psalm of the salt mystic oceans, of whales and harpoons. These two, Poe and Melville, were men as isolated and as intensely personal as the poet Heine, dying in Paris, having

said he could submit his soul to no such single allegiance as the American sailor who leaped from a mast to death in the sea, crying, "I die for General Jackson."

P. T. Barnum had put on public exhibition the colored nurse of General George Washington, "aged 161 years," also the Woolly Horse, also Tom Thumb, and Jenny Lind, the Swedish Nightingale; he had gone bankrupt, lost a fortune, started to win another by lecturing on "The Art of Money-Getting," and was offering a proverb, "The American people love to be humbugged." The historian, George Bancroft, had written large books full of sonorous vocabularies. Humorists were rising with a nicker of horselaughter, with the hee-haw of the Missouri mule in their writings. Charles F. Browne mocked, "I will state that Socrates (or, as he was familiarly called, 'Sock') acted as bottle-holder at a very lively fight when he was only nineteen years of age. The Prize Ring is new in America, but it must grow. We have many members of our National Congress, who give great promise of future usefulness in the Ring, and who are already brilliantly gifted in impromptu fights. Let the friends of Civilization not despair of the Prize Ring in America. No, not a despair." His recipe for hair oil was: "Take two kegs of hog's lard and boil to the consistency of mush. Stir in whisky and musk. Bottle tight and apply when hot with a currycomb."

In Concord, Massachusetts, was the preacher, fisher of men, Emerson. Once when he had spoken, Abraham Lincoln was a listener, and he remembered especially Emerson's remark that a Kentuckian seems to say by his air and manners: "Here am I; if you don't like me, the worse for you." Lincoln had in speeches referred to "the law of compensation," on which Emerson was the leading authority. Original flashes from the heart of Lincoln burned as though from Emerson. "Familiarize yourself with the chains of bondage, and you are preparing your own limbs to wear them."

A quaint lantern of hope was this Emerson, a bridegroom with always a little oil left, some flicker of flame, no matter what happened. "Beware when God lets loose a thinker," was

one signal from him. He had meditations to offer: "There are men whose manners have the same essential splendor as the simple and awful sculpture of the friezes of the Parthenon, and the remains of the earliest Greek art." He had sought these manners of essential splendor. A brother had gone insane when a young man, and Emerson in his journal wrote his grief at a body holding so brilliant a mind being put into a strait-jacket; he asked whether the same blood was not in him, and whether he was not in danger of the same fate; and he decided he would be sane and serene, and was in no danger, because he had a "silly" streak; he knew when to loosen and laugh at himself. "I have so much mixture of *silliness* in my intellectual frame that I think Providence has tempered me. My brother lived and acted and spoke with preternatural energy. My own manner is sluggish; my speech sometimes flippant, sometimes embarrassed and ragged. Edward had always great power of face. I have none; I laugh, I blush, I look ill-tempered, against my will and against my interest." And this was a ballast, a defense. He would be "tipsy" merely with morning air.

A fine, thin dizziness ran through some of his sentences. "We wake and find ourselves on a stair; there are stairs below us, which we seem to have ascended; there are stairs above us, many a one, which go upward and out of sight. . . . Sleep lingers all our lifetime about our eyes, as night hovers all day in the boughs of the fir trees. All things swim and glitter. . . . All our days are so unprofitable while they pass, that 'tis wonderful where we get anything of this which we call wisdom, poetry, virtue. . . . The plays of children are nonsense, but very educative nonsense. So it is with the largest and solemnest things, with commerce, government, church, marriage, and so with the history of every man's bread, and the ways he has come by it."

Emerson loved the English people and wrote, "Every one of these islanders is an island himself, safe, tranquil, incommunicable." Yet they, like the American people, had Pilgrim Fathers who were not perfect. "Twenty thousand thieves landed at Hastings. These founders of the House of Lords were greedy and

ferocious dragoons, sons of greedy and ferocious pirates. They were all alike, they took everything they could carry; they burned, tortured, violated, killed, until everything English was brought to the verge of ruin. Such, however, is the illusion of antiquity and wealth, that decent and dignified men now existing boast their descent from these filthy thieves."

He hoped the culture of America would become American. "It is remarkable that our people should have their intellectual culture from one country and their duties from another. Our books are European. This false state of things is newly in a way to be corrected. America is beginning to assert herself to the senses and to the imagination of her children, and Europe is receding in the same degree." Lecturing on "The Young American," Emerson noted: "The nervous, rocky West is intruding a new and continental element into the national mind, and we shall yet have an American genius." Though he bowed to the past and went beyond Shakespeare and Milton to the ancient Asiatic writers for instruction, he didn't like it that American literary life was "mortgaged to the opinions and usages of Europe, Asia, and Egypt."

Doctors of learning were teaching a false humility. "Say to such doctors: We are thankful to you, as we are to history, to the pyramids, and the authors; but now our day is come; we have been born out of the eternal silence; and now we will live—live for ourselves—and not as the pallbearers of a funeral, but as the upholders and creators of our age; and neither Greece nor Rome, nor the three Unities of Aristotle, nor the three Kings of Cologne, nor the College of Sorbonne, nor the *Edinburgh Review,* is to command any longer."

This message lighted Emerson; it flowed from him. "Now we are come, and will put our own interpretation on things, and moreover, our own things for interpretation. For me, things must take my scale, not I theirs. I will say with the warlike king, 'God gave me this crown, and the whole world shall not take it away.' The whole value of history, of biography, is to increase my self-trust, by demonstrating what man can be and

do. This is the moral of Plutarch, the Tennemanns, the Cudworths."

He smoked cigars, ate pie for breakfast and, when guests refused to join him, as he cut his own wedge, he remarked: "What is pie for?" He opened an address to graduate divinity students with saying: "In this refulgent summer, it has been a luxury to draw the breath of life. The grass grows, the buds burst, the meadow is spotted with fire and gold in the tint of flowers. The air is full of birds, and sweet with the breath of the pine, the balm of Gilead, and the new hay."

He was a millionaire—in his kind of millions. He heard a preacher once who tempted him to say, "I will go to church no more." And why? "A snowstorm was falling around us. The snowstorm was real, the preacher merely spectral; and the eye felt the sad contrast in looking at him, and then out of the window behind him, into the beautiful meteor of the snow." If a child began crying at the dinner table he told the little one to go out and see if the front gate had been left open or whether clouds were coming up and it was going to rain; and the child came back and climbed into its chair, having forgotten what it was crying about.

He had a saying, "Aristocracy is always timid"; he entertained political exiles from Hungary in his house, and gave money to buy rifles for the border fighters in Kansas. He asked his neighbor, George Minot, to go to town meeting and cast a vote with honest men for freedom, his neighbor dropping a wheelbarrow for a moment to say: "No, I ain't goin'. It's no use a-balloting, for it won't stay. What you do with a gun will stay so."

The neighborhood was Concord, known to Paul Revere and the first Minutemen of the American Revolution, a town of frugal, paradoxical, tenacious people. "They stint and higgle on the price of a pew, that they may send 200 soldiers to General Washington," said Emerson in an address on the two-hundredth anniversary of the incorporation of the town. "For splendor, there must be rigid economy somewhere."

Amid groans and titters from respectable young college men,

he had lectured on the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law, and the Missouri Compromise repeal, and mourned: "All the great cities, all the refined circles, all the statesmen, Guizot, Palmerston, Webster, Calhoun, are sure to be found befriending liberty with their words, and crushing it with their votes. Liberty is never cheap." It was in the Tabernacle, in New York City, he so spoke. It was a carefully written speech. He read: "You relied on the Supreme Court. The law was right, excellent law for the lambs. But what if unhappily the judges were chosen from the wolves, and give to all the law a wolfish interpretation?"

Near to Emerson's house and heart was Henry Thoreau. Gray squirrels came frisking into his coat pockets looking for nuts. A mouse was Thoreau's chum once; it crept into his hand and whisked its soft tail against his thumb. On arrival at the gate of heaven, he advised people, "when you knock ask to see God—none of the servants." He perfected an invention, a rubber eraser lead-pencil; a fortune was ahead; but he didn't have time to run a factory. He took to the woods at Walden to see whether a man really needs civilization. It was there he met his mouse, and hunted birds without a gun, and flowers with a notebook; even the weeds were kind to him. He said he was happy as a muskrat. "Do what you love. Know your own bone; gnaw at it, bury it, unearth it, and gnaw it still." He wrote a book; the publisher of it sent back to him nearly the whole edition, unsold. He wrote in his journal, "I have now a library of nearly nine hundred volumes, over seven hundred of which I wrote myself." He scorned the Government. "How does it become a man to behave toward this American government today? I answer that he cannot for an instant recognize that political organization as my government which is the *slave's* government also."

He felt the Government was trying to herd him, and declared: "All men recognize the right of revolution; that is, the right to refuse allegiance to, and to resist, the government, when its tyranny or its inefficiency are great and unendurable. But almost all say that such is not the case now. But such was the case,

they think, in the Revolution of '75." He refused to pay his poll tax; he seceded from the Union, and the constable arrested him. In the lock-up he didn't feel locked up at all, he said. In the handling of him, "in every threat and in every compliment there was a blunder." He pitied the poor Government. "I saw that the State was half-witted, that it was timid as a lone woman with her silver spoons."

Friends paid his tax; he was let loose. In one year he picked eleven barrels of apples from trees of his own planting, and shot a big wildcat. "Whole weeks and months of my summer life slide away in thin volumes like mist and smoke." He lived with birds, bugs, books, and wrote in haunting glimmers: "All the events which make the annals of the nations are but the shadows of our private experiences. The history we read is only a fainter memory of events in our own experience."

At New York University, John William Draper, a historian, was working on a book which would show that geography, weather, land were shaping forces in history, that wars and battles had connections with rivers, markets, harvests, and the way everyday life was rooted. At the University of South Carolina, Joseph Le Conte was working on a theory of the origin of species by natural selection through the operation of the law of the survival of the fittest.

The stage of history had been set for Charles Darwin's book, "The Origin of Species," to be published in 1859, to be read all over the world, to set the world by the ears, to give Darwin the name of "The Monkey Man," to raise the question whether higher education was good or bad. Mendel had crossbred primroses and sweet peas and written out the Mendelian laws. Pasteur had stood with his microscope over yeast bubbles and analyzed germs.

With more powerful microscopes to search dust, and stronger telescopes to sweep the sky, man was finding new worlds under his feet and over his head.

He was learning with his new lenses that a drop of water swarms with an ocean of living wrigglers, and that by training

a strong enough telescope on a spot of mist in the sky he might break it up into a cluster of moving, performing constellations.

"I launch all men and women forward with me into the Unknown," was the cry of a New York poet, who came swaggering from among hackmen and Broadway bus drivers, out of street swarms and ferryboat crowds, in shirt-sleeves and knockabout clothes, with his hat cocked at a slant, saying, "Rise after rise bow the phantoms behind me. Afar down I see the huge first Nothing, I know I was even there," and murmuring, "Long I was hugg'd close—long and long." He had been a printer, a critic on the *Brooklyn Eagle,* a house mover on Long Island, and publisher and typesetter of his own poetry. He named his book "Leaves of Grass," and printed in gilt letters on the green cover of a second edition, the words, "I greet you at the beginning of a great career—R. W. Emerson."

The book had kicked up comment such as that in the *Boston Intelligencer:* "This book should find no place where humanity urges any claim to respect, and the author should be kicked from all decent society as below the level of the brute. There is neither wit nor method in his disjointed babbling, and it seems to us he must be some escaped lunatic, raving in pitiable delirium." In a poem, "To a Common Prostitute," he declared, "Not till the sun excludes you do I exclude you." The poem titles were fresh and rambling, such as "Poem of the Daily Work of the Workmen and Workwomen of These States," or "Poem of Wonder at the Resurrection of the Wheat," "Poem of You, Whoever You Are," "Poem of the Heart of the Son of Manhattan Island," "Poem of the Last Explanation of Prudence," "Poem of Remembrances for a Girl or a Boy of These States," "Poem of the Child That Went Forth and Always Goes Forth, Forever and Forever," "Poem of the Propositions of Nakedness," "Poem of the Sayers of the Words of the Earth." One of the shortest poems had the longest title: "Liberty Poem for Asia, Africa, Europe, America, Australia, Cuba, and the Archipelagoes of the Sea."

Whitman considered himself a piece of human America, a sample for the world to look at. "I celebrate myself, I am large, I contain multitudes," he noted in "Poem of Walt Whitman, An American." One line declared, "I do not ask who you are, that is not important to me," and in another, "I wear my hat as I please indoors and out." As to size, "I do not call one greater or smaller," for, "What is an man anyhow? What am I? What are you?" He was not so original, after all. "These are really the thoughts of all men in all ages, they are not original with me."

Thoreau came down from Concord for a look at this citizen, Whitman, and went away puzzled, saying, "He is democracy." Thoreau liked the wild man that lurked in Whitman writing, "Toss, sparkles of day and dusk—toss on the black stems that decay in the muck, toss to the moaning gibberish of the dry limbs," and in such passages as, "A child said, What is the grass? fetching it to me with full hands; How could I answer the child? I do not know what it is any more than he . . . I guess it is the handkerchief of the Lord."

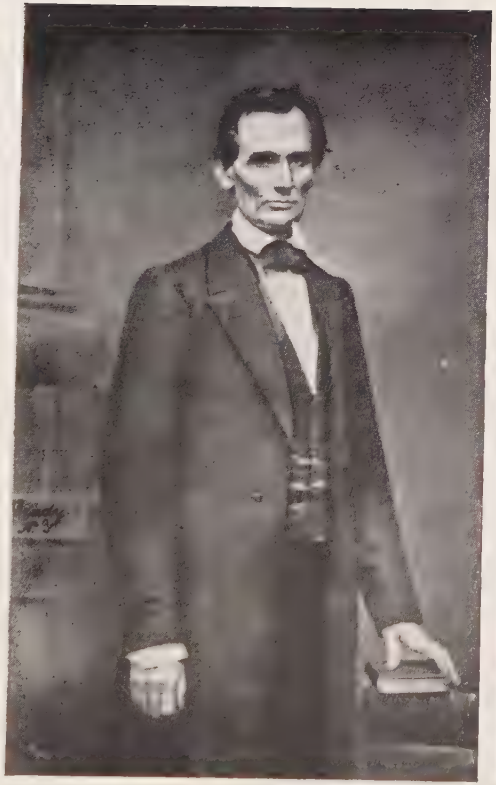
And it happened that Bill Herndon, in Springfield, who had a wild-man streak himself, got hold of a copy of "Leaves of Grass," and left it on the office table, where one by one the office family and Prof. Newton Bateman, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, had all read in the book, excepting Lincoln. One afternoon an argument came up as to whether the book was poetry or lunacy. Lincoln listened, drifted out of a dark, silent mood, and came over and picked up the book. For half an hour, as the argument went on, he read. Then he turned back among the first pages and surprised the office family by reading out loud. There were chants:

Chants of the prairies,
Chants of the long-running Mississippi, and down to the Mexican sea,
Chants of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota,
Chants going forth from the centre from Kansas, and thence equidistant,
Shooting in pulses of fire ceaseless to vivify all.

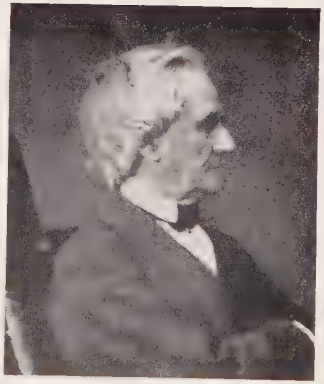
Take my leaves, America, take them South and take them North.

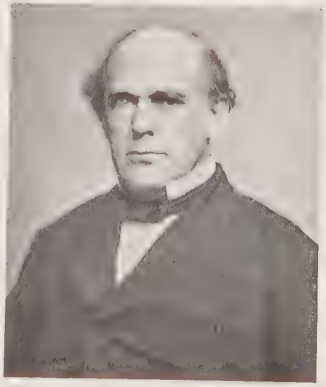
The new industrial and transportation civilization of the Northwest taking form in Chicago in 1858. Grain elevator on Chicago River at Madison Street (upper left). Sherman House, Clark and Randolph Streets, where Lincoln usually stopped (upper right). Tremont Hotel, where Lincoln and Douglas spoke from the balcony to crowds filling the street (lower left). Sailing ships and steamboats near Michigan Avenue (lower right).

Lower left photograph from author's collection
Other photographs from Chicago Historical Society Collection



Lincoln, the day of the Cooper Union speech. Photograph by Mathew B. Brady, New York, February 27, 1860.





Simon Cameron (upper)
Salmon P. Chase (lower)

Caleb B. Smith (upper)
David Carter (lower)

Photographs from Frederick H. Meserve Collection

I conn'd old times,
I sat studying at the feet of the great masters,
Now if eligible O that the great masters might return and study me.

And Lincoln came to lines dealing a blaze of facts at the fire centre of life, themes usually left to doctors and lawyers, and not generally found in poetry. He told the office family some of these were probably too "broad" to publish. Yet this was a small matter. The book was fresh, virile, unconventional, unique in form. It gave promise of a new school of poetry. That night he took the book home, and, as he brought it back and put it on Professor Bateman's table, he remarked in a grim way that it had nearly been "purified in fire." The women didn't like it.

And the sober, religious young law student, Henry Rankin, noticed, as to "Leaves of Grass," that time and again when Lincoln came in, or was leaving, he would pick it up as if to glance at it for only a moment, but instead he would often settle down in a chair and never stop without reading aloud such verses or pages as he fancied. Rankin felt, "Lincoln's estimate of the poetry differed from any brought out in the office discussion."

One summer evening Lincoln had sat on the front porch of the Judd home on Lake Shore Drive in Chicago. The plumes of steamboat smoke and the white canvas of sailboats met the eye as twilight glimmered and failed, and a red rim of a big slow moon pushed up the horizon where the sky line touched the water line of Lake Michigan. The stars came out and a silver sheen glistened on the lake waves breaking and rippling on the beach sand.

The night brought a slow surprise for Mrs. Judd. Something came into the air that evening that set Lincoln to talking to the company on the porch, and his talk was of far things, of man in old times and man in times to come. In the old times of the Bible, and earlier than that, men had looked at the stars and contemplated the mystery of the lighted clusters and forms on the sky.

Then the telescope had come, and the astronomers had found endless series of new stars, and of suns beyond our sun. The creature, man, so restless, must go on finding new worlds, would in the centuries to come be no more satisfied. It would be interesting to guess what man might do in the next thousand years.

Lincoln spoke in an easy, melodious drawl, and Mr. and Mrs. Judd felt that they had heard him in a mood when he believed that with man all things are possible. A chill came on the air; they went into the parlor, where Lincoln sat on the sofa, with his legs stretched out over the carpet, his arms folded behind his back, talking about the earliest times of various discoveries and inventions. He had got into arguments about when brass, gold, and silver instruments, besides precious metals, first came into use, had gone to the Bible for information, and made memoranda.

And when Lincoln had gone to his hotel, Mr. Judd remarked to Mrs. Judd that he was surprised at the way Lincoln was constantly perfecting himself as a scholar. As to the evening's talk by Lincoln, "A professor at Yale could not have been more interesting or more enthusiastic," Mr. Judd remarked to Mrs. Judd.

It was a year when Democratic newspapers had pictured Lincoln as oily, simpering, apologetic. Nominal friends said, "He's slick." He was the only thinker and leader in the Northwest, of wide and commanding strength, who had won a large confidence among the Abolitionist and antislavery forces, without coming out flat-footed for violation of the Fugitive Slave Law.

When a runaway slave was captured, and A. J. Grover at Ottawa was in danger of going to jail for helping a runaway slave, he and Lincoln sat and talked over the case. The law was wrong in taking a man's liberty away without trial by jury, Grover told Lincoln, "not only unconstitutional but inhuman." And Lincoln, with his face alive and mournful, brandishing his long right arm, brought it down on his knee, saying: "Oh, it is ungodly! It is ungodly! No doubt it is ungodly! But it is the law of the land, and we must obey it as we find it."

To which Grover said: "Mr. Lincoln, how often have you sworn to support the Constitution? We propose to elect you President. How would you look taking an oath to support what you declare is an ungodly Constitution, and asking God to help you?"

It was a stinger for Lincoln; his head sloped forward; he ran his fingers through his hair; he dropped into a sad and desperate mood, and came out of it placing his hand on Grover's knee, and saying in a mournfully quizzical manner, "Grover, it's no use to be always looking up these hard spots."

Chapter 132

Five days before Lincoln had started East to give his Cooper Union speech, he delivered a lecture in Springfield for the benefit of the Springfield Library Association, admission twenty-five cents. He stood on the platform and read the lecture, glancing through his spectacles at times to see how the audience was taking it while he rambled along with facts, but no rhetorical "fizzle-gigs," on the subject of "Discoveries and Inventions." The audience was cool; a few chuckled quietly; nearly all wondered just what he was driving at. They were sure, as he was himself, that he was not in a class with lecturers like Henry Ward Beecher, who was paid $125.00 a night.

The lecture was no go; it didn't have the "git" to it. When a Galesburg committee asked if he could come there and lecture, he wrote: "I read a sort of lecture to three different audiences last month and this; but I did so under circumstances which made it no waste of time whatever." A Chicago literary institute was notified: "I am not a professional lecturer. Have never got up but one lecture, and that I think rather a poor one."

He had written two manuscripts of what was substantially the same lecture. Both were titled "Discoveries and Inventions." Many passages were parallel in text and the two versions were identical in viewpoint and feeling.

At Jacksonville the door receipts were small, and Lincoln told the committee: "Be hopeful, boys. Pay my railroad fare and fifty cents for my supper at the hotel and we'll call it square." Whitney joked about reading in a newspaper that Lincoln had gone to Clinton to deliver a lecture; nobody came to hear him and he had gone home without having lectured; and the newspaper commented, "That don't look much like his being President." Lincoln begged Whitney: "Don't mention that; it plagues me." The popular lecture audience didn't care about Lincoln; they wouldn't turn out and buy tickets to hear him.

Herndon was a fizzle as a lecturer about the same time as Lincoln. His subject was "The Sweep of Progress." The *State Journal* said of the evening, "The lecture by Mr. Herndon at Cook's Hall last night was altogether too good for the size of the audience, which did not number one hundred persons." Only on the night previous, the *Journal* noticed, there had been a large outpouring to hear "Lola Montez, a woman who has violated every known rule of life, mocked at the sacredness of the marriage relation and publicly set at naught all that is beautiful and modest in womankind." The *State Journal* had tried to call out a large assembly for Herndon, urging: "Let there be a large audience, for the treasury of the Library Association is not quite full and every twenty-five-cent piece left at the door of the hall this evening will be so much clear gain to the association."

In some places in Lincoln's lecture his audience didn't know whether he wanted them to laugh or not; he mixed serious facts with droll slants at those facts. "Man's first discovery was the fact that he was naked; and his first invention was the fig-leaf apron. This simple article, the apron, made of leaves, seems to have been the origin of clothing—the one thing for which nearly half the toil and care of the human race has ever since been expended."

Lincoln had practiced or rehearsed this lecture, played with it in his mind, very little or not at all. He harked back to say: "What I passed unnoticed before, was that the very first invention was a joint operation, Eve having shared with Adam the

getting up of the apron. And, indeed, judging from the fact that sewing has come down to our times as 'woman's work,' it is very probable she took the leading part—he, perhaps, doing no more than to stand by and thread the needle. That proceeding may be reckoned as the mother of all 'sewing societies,' and the first and most perfect 'World's Fair,' all inventions and all inventors then in the world being on the spot."

He mixed the interesting and serious fact that Adam, the first man, had to invent the art of invention, with the comment: "He seems not to have been a very observing man at first; for it appears he went about naked a considerable length of time before he ever noticed that obvious fact." And Adam must have invented speech before the creation of Eve. "He gave names to the animals while she was still a bone in his side; and he broke out quite volubly when she first stood before him, the best present of his Maker."

He mixed strictly scientific phrases with kitchen and street lingo, saying human speech is "articulate sounds rattled off from the tongue." He was pertinent and quizzical. "How could the 'gopher wood' for the Ark have been gotten out without an ax? It seems to me an ax, or a miracle, was indispensable." Parts of the lecture seemed to be in the tone of the Abe Lincoln who had a wide reputation as a teller of queer comic stories, who, in the view of Bill Green and others, could make a cat laugh. It was free-born and independent, in the air of the witness who testified, "New Salem neighborhood has no principal citizen; every man there is a principal citizen."

He shifted from clear scientific statement, where he meant exactly what he was saying, to sarcastic comment, where he meant the opposite of what he was saying. "Young America is a great friend of humanity; his desire for land is not selfish, but merely an impulse to extend the area of freedom." In a matter-of-fact way, and without building up his case, by inference he insulted respectable and powerful citizens in saying: "Young America is very anxious to fight for the liberation of enslaved nations and colonies, provided, always, they have land. As to those who

have no land, and would be glad of help, he considers they can wait a few hundred years longer." John G. Nicolay, a clerk in the Statehouse, sat in the audience and got the impression that the lecture had been pieced together out of notes and memoranda across, perhaps, ten years.

A touch of the patriarch, the Old Man, "Old Abe," ran through the lecture, the manner of one who has been young and lived and made mistakes and so understands mistakes in others. He took "Young America," a favorite phrase of Stephen A. Douglas, and remarked: "We have all heard of Young America. He is the most current youth of the age. Some think him conceited and arrogant; but has he not reason to entertain a rather extensive opinion of himself? Is he not the inventor of and owner of the present, and sole hope of the future? . . . The iron horse is panting and impatient to carry him everywhere in no time; and the lightning stands ready-harnessed to take and bring his tidings in a trifle less than no time. He owns a large part of the world, by right of possessing it, and all the rest by right of wanting it, and intending to have it. . . . His horror is for all that is old, particularly 'Old Fogy'; and if there be anything old which he can endure, it is only old whisky and old tobacco." And, grimly, in passing, he mentioned "the invention of negroes, or of the present mode of using them, in 1434."

Only three of the twenty-three ministers of churches in Springfield that year wanted Lincoln to be President. The opposition to him in high church circles may have been in his mind in connection with his use of historical material drawn from the Bible. Some pages read off to his audience sounded like random notes from a mass of memoranda; if he could have taken time to organize it, he would have had a book with a title such as "Quaint Thoughts on Historical Data Drawn from the Bible." No important men in American politics since Thomas Jefferson and John Quincy Adams had spoken so strangely, intimately, and sympathetically of roamings and findings in a Bible that was a personal companion and a spiritual resource. He discussed man's discovery of the strength of animals for hauling and transport.

"The earliest instance of it mentioned is when 'Abraham rose up early in the morning and saddled his ass' (Genesis xxii: 3), preparatory to sacrificing Isaac as a burnt-offering; but the allusion to the saddle indicates that riding had been in use for some time; for it is quite probable they rode barebacked awhile, at least, before they invented saddles." Two chapters later in Genesis, the use of camels is told of. "Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man."

He found only one place in the Bible mentioning clothing, before the flood. "Exactly when spinning and weaving originated is not known. At the first interview of the Almighty with Adam and Eve, after the fall, He made 'coats of skin and clothed them' (Genesis iii: 21)." In Exodus was a verse, "All the women that were wise-hearted did spin with their hands," and another, "All whose heart stirred them up in wisdom spun goat's hair."

Lincoln enjoyed facts, exact tabulations, the foundations and scaffolds a science must have to begin with. He tried to show how "absolutely wonderful" is the common speech of people when slowed down and looked at in its actual workings. "You can count from 1 to 100 quite distinctly in about forty seconds. In doing this 283 sounds or syllables are uttered, being seven to each second, and yet there should be enough difference between every two to be easily recognized by the ear of the hearer." In reading the written and spelled-out numbers from one to one hundred, the human eye takes in 864 separate letters in 20 seconds.

He had pictured in his own mind the struggle of man to invent letters, to have an alphabet, to write. "We may readily suppose the idea was conceived, and lost, and reproduced, and dropped, and taken up again and again, until at last the thought of dividing sounds into parts, and making a mark, not to represent a whole sound, but only a part of one, and then of combining those marks, not very many in number, upon principles of permutation. This was the invention of phonetic writing, as distinguished from the clumsy picture writing." Civilized man is marked off from the savage by the alphabet. "Take it from us, and the Bible,

all history, all science, all government, all commerce, and nearly all social intercourse go with it."

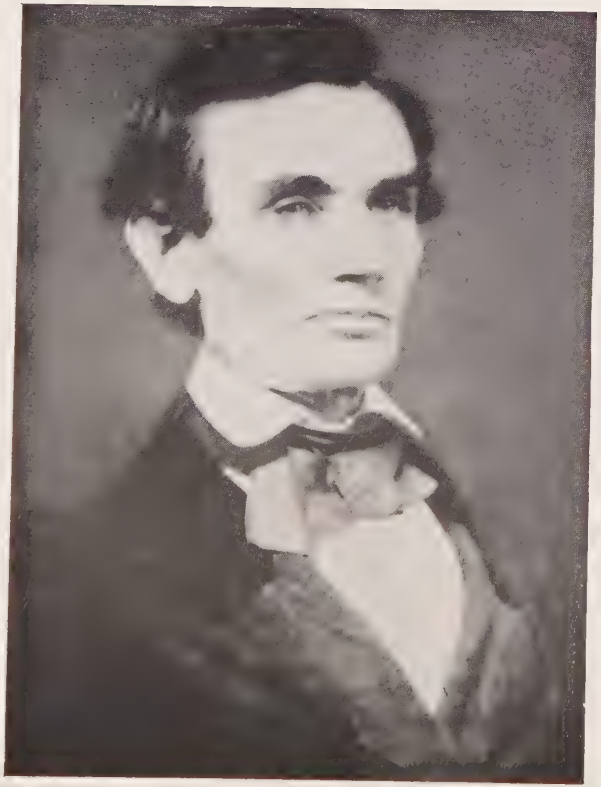
He was a man peering, scrutinizing, feeling his way back into the first facts of civilization. He was a tousled, groping poet, saying: "All creation is a mine and every man a miner. The whole earth, and all within it, upon it and round about it, including himself, are the infinitely various 'leads' from which man, from the first, was to dig out his destiny. In the beginning the mine was unopened, and the miner stood naked, and knowledgeless, upon it." He pointed to fishes, birds, beavers, ants, and honeybees, as "feeders and lodgers merely"; they build their houses no better than five thousand years ago. "Man is the animal who, while he labors, improves his workmanship through Discoveries and Inventions."

He looked at the waste of wind power, and noticed that for thousands of years other thoughtful men had been doing the same thing, trying to figure out how to use the immense horse power that is lost in winds not being hitched up and used in man's service. Except in sailing vessels and a few pumps and windmills, wind power hadn't been tamed and harnessed. Control and direction was the difficulty, for the wind "moves by fits and starts—now so gently as to scarcely stir a leaf, and now so roughly as to level a forest." Men were using sail vessels "at least as early as the time of the prophet Isaiah," and have therefore struggled more than three thousand years knowing at least something about the value of wind power.

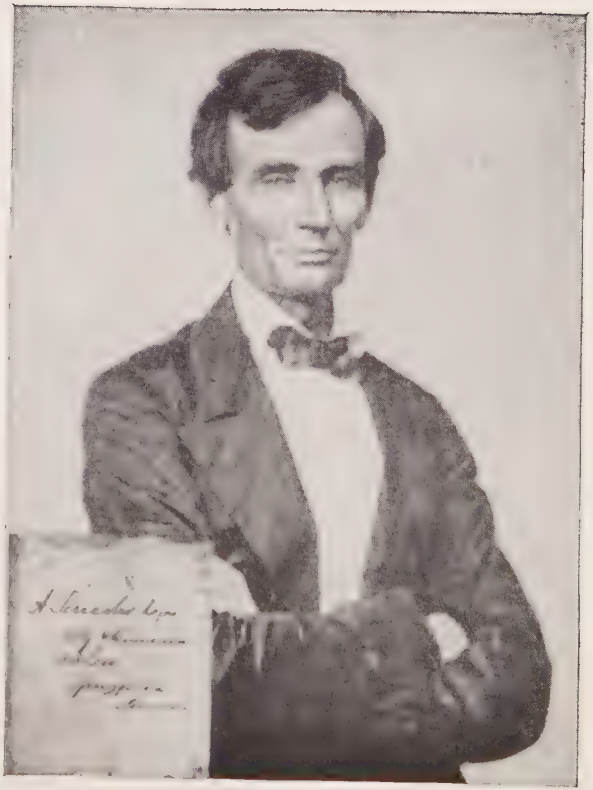
Scattered through the lecture were notes showing that Lincoln had the speculative and conjectural mind of a scientist and a naturalist. The ingenuity and wit that had saved his flatboat on the New Salem dam, the preference for Euclidean axioms and demonstrations, stood out. How were the first boats thought of? "The sight of a crow standing on a piece of driftwood floating down the swollen current of a creek or river might well enough suggest the specific idea to a savage, that he could himself get upon a log, or on two logs tied together, and somehow work his way to the opposite shore of the same stream. Such a

Looking along Fifth Street, at Adams, from the Springfield public square in 1858. Lincoln delivered his lecture on "Discoveries and Inventions" in Cook's Hall, at right.

Photograph from **Oliver R.** *Barrett Collection*



A photograph of an ambrotype made by Samuel G. Alschuler, Urbana, Illinois, April 1858.



A. Lincoln, Esq., Attorney and Counselor at Law, Springfield, Illinois, 1860. From an ambrotype by Preston Butler, Springfield, August 13, 1860.

Photographs from Frederick H. Meserve Collection

suggestion, so taken, would be the birth of navigation; and such, not improbably, it really was. The leading idea was thus caught; and whatever came afterwards, were but improvements upon, and auxiliaries to, it."

Facing the actual physical form of Niagara Falls, Lincoln had little reverence, no awe; he did not stand flustered; it was a fact; it could be measured, as a mass of water in a river reaching a point "where there is a perpendicular jog of a hundred and sixty feet in descent in the bottom of the river." As a physical fact this to his mind was plain. "The water will have a violent and continuous plunge at that point." This much grasped, "It is also plain, the water, thus plunging, will foam and roar, and send a mist continually, in which, during sunshine, there will be perpetual rainbows." All of this could be gazed at with the eye of a practical surveyor or a cool navigator. There was no mystery about the thing itself, about "the mere physical fact of Niagara Falls." And then? "There is more." After that the contemplative mind ran back to the indefinite past, the mystery of the marching centuries of time and elements required to wear down and shape out this physical fact of Niagara Falls. It ran back further than the era of the mammoth and the mastodon. "Niagara, in that long, long time, never still for a single moment, never dried, never froze, never slept, never rested." And this—this was mystery and power challenging imagination and thought.

Man's invention of laughter, if that could be called an invention, he counted among the most important. He would be, if he could, the poet of laughter. He would call laughter "the joyous, beautiful, universal evergreen of life."

He was thankful for printing, for books, by which even dead men can speak their ideas to centuries after them. He would have all men free and able to read. He spoke of shackles on the human mind, of the great mass of men wanting emancipation. He used the phrase "the slavery of the mind" as though there were a mass of white men in shackles as real, if not as visible, as the chains of black men. The discoveries and inventions

inherited from the past were not for a special and privileged few—he spoke plainly as though all learning should be for all men, at least in opportunity. Of the time when printing and books first came into the world, he said: "It is very probable, almost certain, that the great mass of men at that time were utterly unconscious that their condition or their minds were capable of improvement. They not only looked upon the educated few as superior beings, but they supposed themselves to be naturally incapable of rising to equality. To emancipate the mind from this false underestimate of itself is the great task which printing came into the world to perform."

He stopped to take a look around, to compare the present world of men with the past, with the time when rulers and laws made it a crime for the great mass of men either to read or to own books. "It is difficult for us now and here to conceive how strong this slavery of the mind was, and how long it did of necessity take to break its shackles, and to get a habit of freedom of thought established." To this he had to add a hope of America. "A new country is most favorable—almost necessary—to the emancipation of thought, and the consequent advancement of civilization and the arts."

At the Wisconsin state fair in Milwaukee in the autumn, Lincoln made free to speak as a philosopher, a scientist, even as one with kinks of invention in his mind. "I have thought a good deal, in an abstract way, about a steam plow." In the four years past the ground planted with corn in Illinois had produced about twenty bushels to the acre. "The soil has never been pushed up to one-half of its capacity." He recommended "deeper plowing, analysis of the soils, experiments with manures and varieties of seeds, observance of seasons." He told them that for the farmer with time for it, "Every blade of grass is a study," and that, "Not grass alone, but soils, seeds, seasons—hedges, ditches, and fences—plowing, hoeing, and harrowing—reaping, mowing, and threshing—saving crops, pests of crops, diseases of crops, and what will prevent or cure them—hogs,

horses, and cattle," besides many other things and ways on the farm, were "each a world of study in itself."

He had, to begin with, made a proper apology. "I presume I am not expected to employ the time assigned me in the mere flattery of the farmers as a class. My opinion of them is that, in proportion to numbers, they are neither better nor worse than other people." Also, as regards farmers: "I really believe there are more attempts at flattering them than any other class, the reason of which I cannot perceive, unless it be that they cast more votes than any other. On reflection, I am not quite sure that there is not cause for suspicion against you in selecting me, in some sort a politician and in no sort a farmer, to address you."

Farmers with big farms listened with sharp ears at his saying: "The ambition for broad acres leads to poor farming, even with men of energy. I scarcely ever knew a mammoth farm to sustain itself, much less to return a profit upon the outlay. I have more than once known a man to spend a respectable fortune upon one, fail, and leave it, and then some man of modest aims get a small fraction of the ground, and make a good living upon it. Mammoth farms are like tools or weapons which are too heavy to be handled."

Lincoln saw the country as new and young, with plenty of opportunity for the hired laborer to get a farm for himself. "There is no such thing as a free man being fatally fixed for life in the condition of a hired laborer." Some reasoners held: "Labor is prior to, and independent of, capital; in fact, capital is the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed; labor can exist without capital, but capital could never have existed without labor. Hence labor is the superior—greatly the superior—of capital."

There were those who declared the working class to be the mudsills on which the structure of the upper class rested. "According to that theory," Lincoln told his farmers, "a blind horse upon a treadmill is a perfect illustration of what a laborer should be—all the better for being blind, that he could not kick under-

standingly." By that theory education for the workers was regarded as dangerous. "A Yankee who could invent a strong-handed man without a head would receive the everlasting gratitude of the 'mudsill' advocates."

His left hand loosened from the coat lapel, and his two long arms stretched out with quivering fingers, and he spoke strange and simple words that seemed to be part of the sun and the air and soil of Wisconsin that day. If there were laws of God or reason they must be built of the propositions he offered—almost through the shining of salt tears. "Free labor argues that as the Author of man makes every individual with one head and one pair of hands, it was probably intended that heads and hands should coöperate as friends, and that that particular head should direct and control that pair of hands. As each man has one mouth to be fed, and one pair of hands to furnish food, it was probably intended that that particular pair of hands should feed that particular mouth—that each head is the natural guardian, director, and proprietor of the hands and mouth inseparably connected with it; and that being so, every head should be cultivated and improved by whatever will add to its capacity for performing its charge. In one word, free labor insists on universal education."

After the speech he walked around and looked at the prize bulls and stallions, the blue-ribbon corn and wheat, and, chaffing with a knot of farmers, patted a boy on the head and said, "My little man, I hope you live to vote the Republican ticket." The boy's father broke in, "If he ever does, I'll break his neck." And when Lincoln came to where a strong man was lifting heavy weights, he tried his muscles at lifting, and looked down at the short strong man and said, "Why, I could lick salt off the top of your head."

He rode from Chicago to Springfield in a car conducted by a man named Pullman, who was experimenting and trying to find out whether the traveling public cared to sleep while traveling, and, if so, what sort of accommodations they liked. Lincoln paid Pullman fifty cents for half a berth, hung his coat and vest on

a peg, kicked off his boots, and, as Pullman told it, "was sleeping like a healthy baby before the car left the depot."

Soon, however, a passenger who had paid fifty cents for the other half of the berth Lincoln was sleeping in, came to Pullman in a huff, spluttering: "There's a man in that berth of mine and he's about ten feet high. How am I going to sleep there? Go and look at him." Then Pullman, in a huff, went to look, and, as he told it, found "the tall, lank man's knees under his chin, his arms stretched across the bed, and his feet stored comfortably." He shook the tall man awake and told him he would have to pay a dollar for the whole berth. "My dear sir," answered the tall man, "a contract is a contract. I have paid you fifty cents for half this berth, and, as you see, I am occupying it. There's the other half," pointing to a strip about six inches wide. "Sell that and don't disturb me again." And Lincoln went to sleep; later he and Pullman were properly introduced and had a laugh over their first meeting.

During the years that Lincoln had grown, ripened, and hardened, people who had known him in earlier days talked about him. "I knew him when," and so on. Dennis Hanks had told dozens of farmers: "Abe Lincoln? Why, he's a full cousin of mine. We was raised together. I learnt him to read and write."

But when Peter Cartwright, the famous circuit rider, had published the story of his life, a notable 525-page book, in 1857, he nowhere mentioned Abraham Lincoln.

Chapter 133

In Springfield, one afternoon, Lincoln stood at the office window, looking out, alone, with his hands folded behind him, when the law student, John Langdon Kaine, came in. He was glad to see Kaine and quizzed him, searched the young mind about what it wanted to make of life. He led Kaine on to declaim an oration as had been done at high-school declamatory exercises. Kaine took a position at a table and spouted a school-reader tribute

to George Washington. And Lincoln went back to where Kaine had pronounced, "He needs no marble monument, no consecrated pile," and gave the lad his notion of where the emphasis and inflection should be.

In his younger days, Lincoln explained, he had learned by heart many pieces that had what he called "an unnatural style of speech." He had been years unlearning what he had learned. His advice was, "Try to think they're your own words, and talk them as you would talk them to me." It was good to learn pieces of poetry by heart; the sound of words would come, in after life, to take on meanings. Then, too, poetry was handy for quoting on occasions; and of all sources, for quotation, the Bible was the richest. With this advice Kaine went down the stairs and out on the public square, remembering particularly, "He needs no marble monument, no consecrated pile."

As he had grown older, Lincoln had more and more dropped attempts at decoration in his style of writing and speaking. The foundations laid, the walls up, and the roof on, all strong and weather-tight, he hesitated at putting on ornament. The extra flourishes could wait.

The nearest he came to embellishment was an accent of pleasantry and a color of humor. On a level stretch of grim facts joined on a gaunt space of logical reasons and mortised questions, he would superimpose little grinning wooden gargoyles. Whether these comic images were laughing or crying was often hard to tell. They came to be known as Lincolnian.

They were baffling as the flight on the air of a farmer's laughter between plow handles behind sweating horses, curious as the gravity of a man pretending to be accurate and reasonable when calling a horse-chestnut a chestnut horse.

Mathematics had sharpened his sense for the spare, keen measurements, for accurate statements, for eliminations of surplus and excess. This regulated the main arches and gables of the structure of what he had to say.

Then there rose from the elemental and brooding fantasies of his heart and blood, from the poetry and mystery of tragic fate

and comic luck in their interplay in life, perhaps from pools of the wanting and crying and dancing of Nancy Hanks, the incessant lights of laughters. Where this special genius came from was a matter he had questioned his thoughts about.

He wanted to be known for a genius of accuracy. He was six feet, four inches tall, "nearly"; he wouldn't count the boot heel and sock as part of his height. He liked to test his memory for accuracy. Driving toward Springfield with his boy, Bob, he recalled he had surveyed the neighborhood they were driving through. He stopped the buggy several times, and each time, with a chuckle, asked Bob to go into the woods and at a certain distance find a blazed tree, which he had more than twenty years ago marked as a survey corner. "And he never made a mistake," said Bob. He had dug into Euclid and put himself through mental discipline because he had learned that a man can be so smart that without intending to he "comes out of the same hole he went in at."

He wouldn't believe everything he saw on a government map. Zimri Enos asked him for a legal opinion on certain rules in government surveys, the opinion to be read to a convention of surveyors. After telling what he believed to be the true rule in establishing strategic lines, he wrote: "Nearly, perhaps quite, all the original surveys are to some extent, erroneous, and in some of the Sections, greatly so. In each of the latter, it is obvious that a more equitable mode of division than the above, might be adopted; but as error is infinitely various, perhaps no better single rule can be prescribed."

A lawyer in Springfield, after ten years of courtroom acquaintance with Lincoln, tried to analyze Lincoln's mind, noting: "Physiologically and phrenologically, the man was a sort of monstrosity. His frame was long, large, bony, and muscular; his head small and disproportionately shaped. It is inconsistent with the laws of human organization for any such creature to possess a mind capable of anything called great." It was a case of where "passion or sentiment steadied and determined an otherwise indecisive mind." He would say Lincoln "had no mind not

possessed by the most ordinary of men." Such was the view of more than one of the men with offices on the public square in Springfield. He was honest, smart, clever, perhaps cunning—so they said. They were annoyed about the Cooper Union speech, and comment by eastern editors that Lincoln had superb mental resources, a remarkable gift of analysis and statement. They told each other such was politics.

Lincoln read newspapers, "skirmished through them," as he said. He had learned how to pick his way among the articles and items so as to waste little time and get at the special facts he was mousing for. It was part of his system for getting at public opinion, the temper of the people, and the spirit of the times. But this wasn't enough; for such a purpose he couldn't trust newspapers; in some particulars nearly all of them were trying to fool part of the people all the time, all of the people part of the time, or all of the people all of the time. So Lincoln talked with people, listened in while others talked, trained himself as a listener—and, in fact, developed that gift of some dramatic artists of, in a manner, standing outside himself and hearing himself talk and watching himself act. It was since this development that he had been able to wear down Douglas, and hold his own with the star political platform performer of the country, in the drama of politics. And he was well started in competing with that other star performer, Senator William H. Seward of New York.

Behind prejudiced and one-sided newspaper items, he searched his way through to the essential facts confessed. His law practice and companionship with horse thieves, slanderers, and murderers, sharpened him in getting at the truth in partisan newspapers during a time of violence, of boxes of Sharpe's rifles marked "Beecher's Bibles," of disputes as to whether old John Brown was a child of Christ or a son of the Devil. The newspapers were full of "catchwords" and in his Lost Speech he mentioned the significance of catchwords; to know the times he lives in, a man must know its catchwords; he had even lived his fifty years to see "Honest Abe" and "Old Abe" become

catchwords. The art and science of plucking out the hidden motives or the probable designs of cunning men, from behind the spoken word screens and the verbal disguises, was one that challenged him.

"The language used becomes ambiguous, roundabout, and mystical," he noted of the framers of the Constitution and their alluding to slavery three times without mentioning it openly by name. He sought out in the current events the motives behind the proclaimed record. There could be such a thing as a "steady debauching of public opinion" by men with hidden motives, calling a chestnut horse a horse-chestnut; he chose to tell the farmers at Clinton, Illinois, "You can fool all the people part of the time and part of the people all the time, but you can't fool all the people all the time," but in Connecticut, in the shadow of Yale University, he urged, "Let us be diverted by none of those sophistical contrivances wherewith we are so industriously plied and belabored."

Two men who had watched at close hand the working of Lincoln's mind were Herndon and Whitney. Herndon said he might ask Lincoln a question and Lincoln would sit in a moody spell without replying. "Meanwhile, I would forget that I had asked him; but to my surprise a few moments later (once it was over fifteen minutes) he would break the silence and give me a satisfactory answer." Whitney noted a rare accuracy of memory. "Once we all, court and lawyers, except Lincoln, insisted that a witness had sworn so-and-so, and it turned out that Lincoln was correct, and that he recollected better than the united bench and bar." He had not changed since Josh Speed had said he had a quick mind and he answered: "No, you are mistaken; I am slow to learn and slow to forget. My mind is like a piece of steel—very hard to scratch anything on it, and almost impossible after you get it there to rub it out."

Lincoln often read out loud to Herndon in the office, explaining: "I catch the idea by two senses; for, when I hear what is said and also see it, I remember it better even if I do not understand it better." In one particular he was a brother in good

standing with other original thinkers of his day and hour. He read much, but in modern books he did not read thoroughly. He skimmed, dipped for the items he could use, and never finished a novel. The Bible, Blackstone, the Constitution of the United States, the Declaration of Independence, and the poem, "Immortality," were among the few writings that he seemed to have read through and through and so lived with that they were part of him for use and service.

Lincoln was careless about mental culture for show, just as he was careless about manners and dress for show. Whitney tried to solve this careless approach. "To all acts, accidents, incidents, he made the highwayman's demand, 'Stand and deliver.' Every material object or moral entity presented to his optical or mental vision conveyed to him an object-lesson. His shrewd but apparently indifferent gaze comprehended and included every element of the object under review. Under that mask and disguise of nonchalance and negative dissimulation he was an eager student; and moral objects which to the common apprehension were chaotic and heterogeneous were orderly and homogeneous to him." He had cross-examined himself in a stern philosophic way as to honesty, for instance, and to be honest was a negative virtue, was merely non-stealing; whereas justice was something positive, a power generator.

He laughed at himself for helping a pig in a gate or lifting a fledgling bird up into a nest, and philosophized intricately to the effect that he wasn't moral; he was selfish; his peace of heart would have been disturbed all day if he had not helped the pig or the bird; he was paid in good feeling. It was this sort of relentless reasoning he liked in Bacon. But it surprised Whitney that Lincoln, the just man, should enjoy and approve of Bacon, who was shown to have taken bribe money. This was true, Lincoln admitted, but it had never made any difference in the decisions of Bacon. In courtrooms Lincoln had a reputation for being almost uncanny in picking the moment when a crooked witness was swerving from the truth as to essential facts.

Out of little situations in life he constructed little dramas that

he carried with him in the portfolio of his memory. A line out of life was as good as anything in the books. Whitney noted: "We were together when the trial of Sickles was on, and John B. Haskin testified that he and his wife called on Mrs. Sickles when her husband was absent and found her and Key together—she mixing salad; an empty champagne bottle being on the table. As they left the house Mrs. Haskin said to her husband: *'She is a bad woman.'* That expression tickled Lincoln's fancy. I heard him tell it over and over."

Whitney said Lincoln was like the race horse, Flora Temple. She was a gangling, disjointed horse that couldn't run till after she got started. She gathered speed as she got going. Highland Maid, Lancet, Rose of Washington, and George M. Patchen, fast horses, had been beaten by Flora Temple. Tacony, the first to trot a mile in 2.25½, had lost to her. So had Princess, a high-bred mare brought on from California to the East. And the small bay stallion, Ethan Allen, and the big well-bred golden chestnut horse, John Morgan. All had to take her dust. She had brought the trotting record for a mile down from 2.25½ to 2.19¾. Her pedigree, the line of bloods she came from, was in dispute, though it was published that she was sired by one-eyed Kentucky Hunter, and her dam was Madam Temple by a spotted Arabian horse. She was a rough-coated little bay with a bobtail, sold for $13.00 when a colt on account of her wild temper, and lost as a scrub horse among cattle and mules, bought and sold as a gamble at rising prices, till she began to carry away ribbons and was priceless; cigars and steamboats were given her name.

In many circles her history had the real glint of American romance.

Chapter 134

When Parker was leaving Boston for Rome, Herndon wrote: "God grant you a happy journey. May Heaven's great eye and loving heart watch over you." Yet Herndon called himself a

freethinker, an infidel, a theist, and classified Lincoln as such. It was outside of Springfield that Lincoln was first described as "a Christian gentleman." Yet both men believed in God and constantly mentioned God. In frank private office talk they required God. At desperate points in discussion, Lincoln said to Herndon many times, "It will all come out right in God's good time."

"I hate the law," was a saying of Herndon. To Parker he wrote, "My first love is God, then man, then nature." He went hand in hand with his children in fields of yellow cowslips and white daisies, and told them some Great Intelligence, a wise Creator, had sprinkled those flowers over the pastures of the earth. He was a philosopher; he should have had a tub in the sun or some garden free from mortgages. "It annoys me," he said to himself, when Lincoln stretched on the office sofa, with one leg flung out over a chair, read politics and jokes out loud from newspapers; he made excuses and left the office. The peace of sailing white clouds over ripening oat and barley fields called to him; and the deep green and the pale green of the grain changing to bright straw and salmon shades, wave after wave rolling in the summer wind, the tipsy flaunts of landscapes.

He used a sweetheart talk with the wild asters trembling on wiry stems, the shrubby acacia filled with yellow blooms, the blue and purple Johnny, the May apple, the wild pansy, the scarlet honeysuckle, the fiery Indian pink; he had a speaking acquaintance with the places where these were broadcast. He knew the nickname of the lady's-slipper was "the whippoorwill shoe" and the regular title of the red-bud was the Judas tree. Bluebells flared at the mouth with purple, and bent in humility, the bushy dwarf squatted and the running wild rose climbed, speaking with symbols. The mullein, with a single shaft shooting straight up from three to six feet high, with hairy and velvety leaves flat on the ground, was "an emblem of desolation." His best love among flowers was the mountain phlox, meeting the sun on the eastern side of a hill, in patches five to eight inches high, ten or twenty slender stalks on whose heads would come and go

many peach-colored blossoms with five petals. In timberland he called the roll of elm, buckeye, maple, ash, hickory, oak, sugar tree, cherry, haw, cottonwood, and the plum, crabapple, dewberry, hackberry, pawpaw, fox grape.

He made notations: "Eastward across the river from New Salem, on the bluffs, mounds, and peaks may be found by thousands the dead of the Silurian period of the world, millions of years gone by. We find the periwinkle, the bivalve, and other such shells, with other higher animal remains. The sand-bars on the river's edge and in the river, give up to man the dead of all past time; and all around, all beneath, and above are life and death, and all is the past, the present, and the future, meeting, mingling, mixing, and sinking into one—God, who is all."

And yet, in spite of his companionship with the creepers and flyers of air, field, and sky, and his books that he had read and placed row on row in shelves, he was torn and burned with questions and hankerings neither the fields nor the books would satisfy. Nor, when he went to them, could he get the lights he asked from whisky and women.

He couldn't organize himself. He felt sorry for Lincoln, and almost moaned at watching the "woe-struck face" of Lincoln studying the office floor, the shifting gaze out of the window, desolate with melancholy, the barriers up to all who would speak or interrupt. He tried to figure out whether it was heredity, environment, glands, slow blood circulation, or constipation, or thwarted love. Yet Herndon knew that this melancholy man was a steadying force in his own life, something like a big brother or a shrewd uncle. One was "Billy," the other "Mr. Lincoln," across the long years of their partnership. When Billy got blind-drunk, as had happened several times, and tarnished the firm's reputation so that others asked Lincoln if he wouldn't be wise to get rid of a tosspot partner, the answer was "No," and in a tone as though it was nobody's business but his own and Billy's.

Herndon had watched Lincoln grow. The phenomenon of Lincoln's growth was for him close to a miracle. There was no stopping; year by year Lincoln grew; it was a marvel; he was

the law partner of a hero; he would some day write the life of this hero; he had his ideal of biography; it should tell everything; it should tell, even, how the man walked.

He noticed how Lincoln walked; the walk of Lincoln was a sort of poem to him. "When he walked he moved cautiously but firmly; his long arms and giant hands swung down by his side. He walked with even tread, the inner sides of his feet being parallel. He put the whole foot flat down on the ground at once, not landing on the heel; he likewise lifted his foot all at once, not rising from the toe, and hence he had no spring to his walk. His walk was undulatory—catching and pocketing tire, weariness, and pain, all up and down his person, and thus preventing them from locating." And as to general structure, "The whole man, body and mind, worked slowly, as if it needed oiling."

And the face of Lincoln? When lights sprang into the gray eyes and fires of emotion flooded out over the scarred fissures, then, "Sometimes it appeared as if Lincoln's soul was fresh from its creator."

Herndon was a transcendentalist, writing to Parker of "the All-All, forever present and eternally creative, creating world and worm, zoöphyte and man, fire and frost," reminding Lincoln by some of his talk of the Pekin witness who "came out of the same hole he went in at." Lincoln didn't have time to follow Herndon in some of his ramblings. Once Herndon put his philosophy in a nutshell, writing to Parker: "Come, let us leap up into the uncolumned air and rest upon the spongy foundations, and there let us see satellite, planet, and sun; sea, air, and land. What do you see? Coexistences and successions, powers and forces, and consciously God—no Laws; but all, all governed by constant modes of operation, God the immediate cause. This is my philosophy. Am I wrong?"

Thus Herndon sought spongy cloud foundations for his footing while Lincoln was hurling himself at Euclid and the impossible job of squaring the circle. It was natural then that Herndon should look on the mental Lincoln as cold, calm, precise. "Lincoln's fault, if any, was that he saw things less than they really

were; less beautiful and more frigid. He crushed the unreal, the inexact, the hollow, the sham. He saw what no man could dispute, but he failed to see what might have been seen." And Herndon saw that Lincoln's life had been such that he could not trust or use what other minds offered him in certain emergencies. "Hence he tore down to their deepest foundations all arrangements of facts, and constructed new ones to govern himself."

Herndon's own kin had come from Virginia to Kentucky by the Wilderness Road through Cumberland Gap, and he mused over the fact. "The first settlers of central and southern Illinois were men of Lincoln's type. They came from the limestone regions of Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee, and were men of giant strength, physical force, and by nature mentally strong. They were original, were individualists. The strong alone from 1818 to 1830 could get here, and the strong alone could survive here. No one is like Lincoln, and yet many are of his type." He scrutinized Lincoln as a "critter" and found: "Lincoln's flesh is coarse, hard, harsh; color of his flesh saffron brown; no blood seemingly in it; flesh wrinkled. His flesh looks dry and leathery, tough and everlasting; his eyes are small and gray; head small and forehead receding. Beneath his rough bodily exterior Nature weaves her fine network of nerves." He may be as listless as an alligator while ideas and motives sleep. The blood has to travel far to reach from the heart to the fingers, toes—and brain.

Yet, "the convolutions of his brain are long; they do not snap off quickly like a short, thick man's brain. The enduring power of Mr. Lincoln's brain is wonderful. He can sit and think without food or rest longer than any man I ever saw."

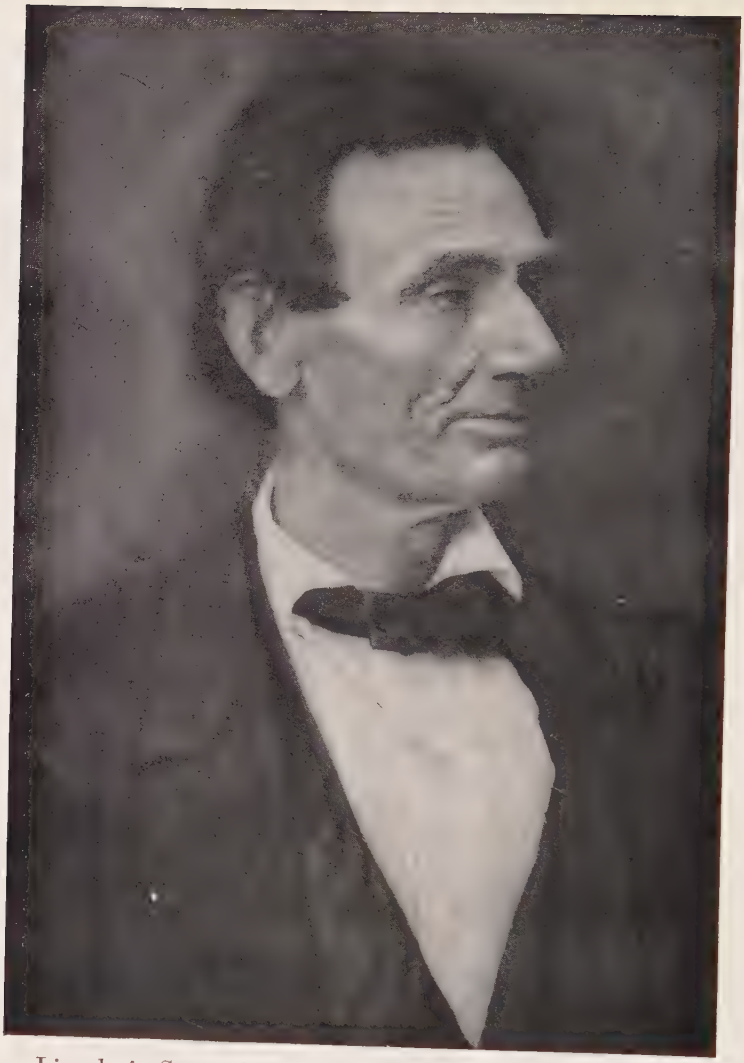
Lincoln required not merely proof, but demonstration. He would not believe the circle was unsquarable till he had toiled the limit of his strength and found for himself it was so. "He can believe nothing unless his sense or logic can reach it," Herndon noted. "I often read to him a law point, a decision or something I fancy; he can not understand it until he takes the

book out of my hand and reads the thing for himself. He is terribly, vexatiously sceptical. He can scarcely understand anything, unless he has time and place fixed in his mind." Of Lincoln and whisky he would put it down that Lincoln said: "I am entitled to little credit for not drinking, because I hate the stuff; it is unpleasant and always leaves me flabby and undone." As to eating an apple: "He disdained the use of a knife to cut or pare it. Instead he would grasp it around the equatorial part, holding it thus until his thumb and forefinger almost met, sink his teeth into it, and then, unlike the average person, begin eating at the blossom end. When he was done he had eaten his way over and through rather than around and into it. Such, at least, was his explanation. I never saw an apple thus disposed of by any one else." He would tell about the family Lincoln, the boys, Willie and Tad, in the office with their father on a Sunday morning while the mother was at church; the boys pulled books off shelves, upset ink bottles, threw pencils into the spittoon, and their father went on with his work as though the office were empty.

Lincoln would take a terribly mixed and tragic layout of human affairs, and use a fable or illustration to give his impression of it, because, as Herndon noted, "there were, in the vast store of words, so few that contained the exact coloring, power, and shape of his ideas." One morning in 1859 the two men were talking in their office about what would happen if war broke out between the states. Herndon was afraid the North would split into so many quarreling factions that there would be no unity for making war. Lincoln replied, saying the South reminded him of the fellow "who contended that the proper place for the big kettle was inside of the little one," and then branched into an illustration in war psychology: "Go to the river bank with a coarse sieve and fill it with gravel. After a vigorous shaking you will observe that the small pebbles and sand have sunk from view and fallen to the ground. The next larger in size, unable to slip between the wires, will still be found within the sieve. By thorough and repeated shakings

Mary Todd Lincoln, the wife of Abraham Lincoln, in crinoline days.

Photographs from Frederick H. Meserve Collection



Lincoln in Springfield, June, 1860. Hessler, a Chicago photographer, was sent downstate by political managers who wanted "more pleasant" campaign pictures.

Original photograph loaned by Edward J. Steichen

you will find that, of the pebbles still left in the sieve, the largest ones will have risen to the top. Now, if war is inevitable and will shake the country from centre to circumference, you will find that the little men will fall out of view in the shaking. The masses will rest on some solid foundation, and the big men will have climbed to the top. Of these latter, one greater than all the rest will leap forth equipped—the people's leader in the conflict."

Time had been required to grow Lincoln. "He has had a slow build-up, a slow development; he has grown up like the forest oak, tough, solid, knotty, gnarled, standing out with power against the storm, and almost defying the lightning." Thus Herndon's hero, who knew what oaks know, and murmured out of his shadows, "I shall meet with some terrible end."

Chapter 135

LINCOLN had once written to a younger man his regrets over what he called "the serious, long-faced letter I wrote yesterday."

Then he told this friend in gay and rippling lines, "Let the past as nothing be—go it while you're young!"

Women registered impressions with Lincoln. Mystic women came and went sometimes in quizzical, hazy reveries. Talking with T. W. S. Kidd once, he said that when he was a boy in Indiana a wagon broke down near the Lincoln place; and the travelers on the wagon, a man, his wife and their two girls, came to the Lincoln cabin, and cooked their meals at the Lincoln fireplace till the wagon was fixed.

"The woman had books and read us stories," Lincoln told Kidd. "I took a great fancy to one of the girls. And when they were gone I thought of her a great deal, and one day sitting out in the sun by the house I wrote out a story in my mind."

He got on his father's horse and rode after the wagon with the girls in it. He caught up with them; they were surprised to see him. Thus his daydream went, sitting in the sun.

"I talked with the girl and persuaded her to elope with me, and that night I put her on my horse, and we started off across the prairie. After several hours we came to a camp; and when we rode up we found it was the one we had left a few hours before and we went in.

"The next night we tried again, and the same thing happened —the horse came back to the same place. And then we concluded not to elope. I stayed until I had persuaded her father to give her to me."

He told Kidd he had intended at one time to write out this action as a story to be published. "I began once, but I concluded it was not much of a story." And he added, "But I think that was the beginning of love with me."

One of the law students in the Lincoln & Herndon office noticed that the junior and senior partners had different ways toward women who came into the office. When a woman was through talking with Herndon about her case, she usually left Herndon at the desk and went to the door alone and stepped out. In case she was a good-looking woman and pleased the eye of Herndon, he would step to the door with her and perhaps pat her on the arm or the shoulder in bidding her good day, and close the door after her. With women callers who came to see Lincoln the action was different, as this law student observed, for no matter how homely and battered the woman might be, after the conference on her case was ended, Lincoln would step to the door with her, bid good day, and close the door. Both the good-lookers and those not so good-looking had his escort from the desk to the door, and no matter what their looks he did not risk a pat on arm or shoulder.

A law student saw Lincoln one day start to tell a story of racy color. But Lincoln paused, went to each one of three doors to the office, and looked, said the student, "to make sure there was no woman to listen." He added, "Herndon wouldn't do that."

In the matter of women, Herndon was free and easy, and Lincoln was not. When Herndon remarked to Joe Gillespie that

Lincoln "ran smoothly" among the paths of the wicked, the fallen, the drunken, the disorderly, never complaining, and perfectly at home among the worst people, he added the cryptic, "Lincoln had no appetites, but *woman* must keep out of his way."

In the personal decisions as to how he should fill out those few eye-blinks between being born and dying, Lincoln was as independent and free-going as he was in shaping his own formulas of politics and law. Of two of his best friends among lawyers, one said Lincoln was "harmless as a dove and wise as a serpent," and the other, "He respectfully listened to all advice, and rarely, if ever, followed it." He was a man one Springfield old-timer tried to sketch summarily by saying, "He had the faculty of calculation," while Whitney sought to convey an elusive fugitive. "He could more effectively employ language to conceal his thoughts than Talleyrand, and, while guilty of no duplicity, could hide his thoughts and intentions more efficiently than any man with a historical record."

About women in general the lawyers of the Eighth Circuit had often joked Lincoln. But in only one case had they ever teased him about being too much in the company of any one particular woman. She was a singer, Lois Newhall, of the Newhall Family, a concert troupe who gave programs in churches and town-hall lyceum courses. Though not especially attractive in looks, she was considered a good singer; she had met Lincoln and they took a liking for each other. From the concert platform she would pick him out in the audience and send him a smile of recognition and greeting.

Whitney noticed that if the Newhall Family was to perform in a town where the Eighth Circuit lawyers had arrived, Lincoln would arrange his affairs so that he could be on hand at the church or the town hall in time to attend the entertainment. "No trial, consultation, or business engagement of any kind was allowed to interfere," said Whitney. "To most of us the thing for a time seemed more or less strange until finally the real reason developed. It was Lincoln's predilection for a woman.

The attraction was a little unusual for Lincoln, who was particularly thoughtful in matters of that kind."

Judge Davis, Leonard Swett, and others close to Lincoln, saw the affair drifting along to a point where they felt it was somewhat their affair too. With sober faces they spoke of the honor of the bar of the Eighth Circuit being involved; he should be reminded of his duty as a married man; there was danger in entangling alliances; and so on. His rejoinder was easy: "Don't trouble yourselves, boys, there's no danger. She's actually the only woman in the world, outside of my wife, who ever dared to pay me a compliment, and if the poor thing is attracted to my handsome face and figure it seems to me you homely fellows are the last people on earth who ought to complain."

One evening at the Macon House in Decatur, the Eighth Circuit lawyers were having a social hour with the Newhall Family, the parents, two sisters, a brother, and a brother-in-law. The singing and fun had reached a point where one of the lawyers tried to get Lincoln to sing for the company. He urged, "Lincoln, you have been enjoying for almost a week the delightful music produced by these ladies, and it seems only fair to the rest of us that you should entertain them by singing some of the songs for which you are already famous." All the others joined in this call for Lincoln to sing. One lawyer said: "Why, over on the Sangamon Abe has a great reputation as a singer. It is quite a common thing over there to invite him to farm auctions and have him start off the sale of stock with a good song." Lincoln refused. He never was a singer in his life; what reputation he had, he wouldn't risk; they could beg; he wasn't going to offer a song.

But Lois Newhall and her sister were anxious for Lincoln to sing. "Each of us had taken a liking to him," she said afterward. "We had heard him speak several times, but that did not impress us so much as his pleasing personality and his happy manner toward women." They teased him for a song, giving a dozen reasons. Lincoln listened to them, showed a threatening face to the lawyers who were enjoying his bashfulness, turned

on his heel, and told the company it was a late hour and he was going to bed.

Starting upstairs, he had to pass Lois Newhall, sitting at a melodeon; just as he passed her she looked up into his face and said: "Mr. Lincoln, if you have a song that you can sing, I know that I can play the accompaniment. If you will just tell me what it is, I can follow you even if I am not familiar with it."

"Why, Miss Newhall," he laughed, still bashful, "if it would save my soul, I couldn't imitate a note that you would touch on that instrument. I never sang in my life; and those fellows know it. They are simply trying to make fun of me." He paused; some sort of disappointment crossed her face; and he said: "But I'll tell you what I am willing to do. Inasmuch as you and your sister have been so kind and entertained us so generously, I shall try to return the favor. Of course, I can't produce music, but if you will be patient and brave enough to endure it, I will repeat for your benefit several stanzas of a poem of which I am particularly fond."

Then he stepped to the doorway leading from the hotel parlor to the stairway; he seemed too tall to stand in the doorframe, and he leaned against the casing, half closed his eyes, and brought out from the attic of his heart the quaint, faded poem, with the stains of old spinet wood in it, and the rose and gold of lost sunsets. He recited the lines beginning, "Oh, Why Should the Spirit of Mortal Be Proud?" It was the first time the Newhalls had heard the piece. The moods of joking and teasing came to an end.

Lois told her sister afterward that it was all she could do to keep back the tears as that long shadowy riddle of a man wandered through the sorrowful lines. "A flash of the lightning —a break of the wave—He passeth from life to his rest in the grave." As he was to go upstairs, she asked him who wrote the poem. "My dear Miss Newhall, I am ashamed to say that I do not know. But if you really like it, I will write it off for you tonight before I go to bed, and leave a copy on the table so that you may have it to read when you sit down to breakfast."

In the dusk of dawn the next morning, Lois Newhall came down to the hotel dining-room where candles flickered among lengthened shadows. And she had drawn a chair to the table and was eating a winter breakfast by candlelight, as she had done many times before. But as to this particular breakfast, she said at a later time: "I was eating pancakes, and was in the act of cutting one, holding it with my fork while I used the knife, when I became aware that some one was behind and bending over me. A big hand took hold of my left hand, covering it on the table, and with his right hand, over my shoulder, he laid down a sheet of paper covered with writing, in front of my plate. I realized it was Mr. Lincoln. He told me that he was due to leave town in a few minutes, and as he moved away, he looked back, waved his hand, exclaiming, 'Good-by, my dear!' and passed through the door. It was the last time I ever saw him."

One of Lincoln's sayings was, "I shall never be old enough to speak without embarrassment when I have nothing to talk about." When girls from Knox and Lombard colleges came to present him with a silk banner at the Sanderson House in Galesburg, he had said to the Galesburg mayor, "I haven't got any of that kind of spare change." The small talk, the patter of conversational nothings, the formal speeches that should be ingratiating and lubricatory, projecting ciphers while pretending to emit numbers, this he termed "spare change."

To understand Lincoln and women, one might have to begin with his feel for the comic with its quick eye for pretense and surface dignity, besides that single thing in his behavior which had ever been characterized as "exquisite." When it was mentioned of Lincoln, "He has an *exquisite* sense of justice," that was the first time anything about him had been chosen as of such peculiar inheritance and significant development that it took the character of the exquisite.

When he had written of Miss Owen as "over-size" and spoken of her "want of teeth" and "weather-beaten appearance in general" he balanced it with "No woman I have ever seen has a

O why should the spirit of mortal be proud?
Like a swift fleeting meteor— a fast flying cloud
A flash of the lightning— a break of the wave,
He passeth from life to his rest in the grave.

The leaves of the Oak, and the Willow shall fade;
Be scattered around, and together be laid.
And the young and the old, and the low and the high,
Shall moulder to dust, and together shall lie.

Reduced facsimile of "Immortality" in Lincoln's handwriting; a copy of this poem he gave to Miss Lois Newhall at winter candlelight breakfast; the above are the opening verses of a complete manuscript in the Barrett collection.

finer face," and in intellect "she was not inferior to any." He confessed his vanity was touched by her saying No as he proposed "over and over again" and, "I then for the first time began to suspect that I was really a little in love with her." He had closed his self-analysis with: "Others have been made fools of by the girls. . . . I made a fool of myself. . . . Now I can never be satisfied with any one who would be blockhead enough to have me."

The remark was thrown at Lincoln several times in the Sanderson house in Galesburg that he was afraid of women. He laughed it off with saying, "A woman is the only thing I am afraid of that I know can't hurt me."

He told Whitney he hated the little job of telling a hayrack full of girls in white gowns representing the states of the Union, "I also thank you for this beautiful basket of flowers." These tallied with what Mary Owens had said, that he was "deficient in the little links that make for woman's happiness." After a little tea party at the home of Mayor Boyden of Urbana one evening, the mayor and Whitney excused themselves for an hour, and left Lincoln alone with Mrs. Boyden, Mrs. Whitney, and her mother. Whitney, on returning, found Lincoln "ill at ease as a country boy," eyes shifting from floor to ceiling and back, arms behind and then in front and then tangled as though he tried to hide them but couldn't, and his long legs tying and untying themselves. Whitney pitied him. "I could not understand it unless it was because he was alone in a room with three women."

As he was arguing a case at Urbana, several ladies came in to listen, and the lawyers made room for them within the bar. Lincoln paused during the swish of the skirts and the adjustment of the new section of the audience, and then said, "I perceive, gentlemen, that you are like all the rest of the fellers in your admiration of the fair sex—in fact, I think, from appearances, that you are a little worse than the common run"; and after more remarks that raised a laugh, he took up his argument, first saying with a quizzical glance, "Now, boys, behave yourselves."

A woman wrote her admiration of his course in politics, and he thanked her in a letter which acknowledged, "I have never corresponded much with ladies; and hence I postpone writing letters to them, as a business which I do not understand." A few men knew of his saying, after he had given money or time or a favor in answer to a pathetic but probably bogus appeal, "I thank God I wasn't born a woman."

Lincoln's ways with women interested Herndon as much as his walk or talk. In the office, around the public square, or at Dr. Wallace's drug store or in Bunn's bank and store, or out on the Eighth Circuit, Herndon believed Lincoln cloaked his ways with women by a rare and fine code. "Mr. Lincoln had a strong, if not terrible passion for women," said Herndon. "He could hardly keep his hands off a woman, and yet, much to his credit, he lived a pure and virtuous life. His idea was that a woman had as much right to violate the marriage vow as the man—no more and no less. His sense of right—his sense of justice—his honor forbade his violating his marriage vow. Judge Davis said to me, 'Mr. Lincoln's honor saved many a woman.' This I know. I have seen Lincoln tempted and I have seen him reject the approach of woman!"

A woman charged with keeping a house of ill fame had the firm of Lincoln & Herndon for lawyers; they asked for a change of venue; and Lincoln drove across the prairies from one town to another with the madam of the house and her girls. After the trial the madam was asked about Lincoln's talk with her. Yes, he told stories, and they were nearly all funny. Yes, but were the stories proper or improper, so to speak? Well—the madam hesitated—they were funny . . . she and all the girls laughed . . . but coming to think it over she believed the stories could have been told "with safety in the presence of ladies anywhere." Then she added, without being asked, and as though it ought to be part of the story, "But that is more than I can say for Bill Herndon."

One man on the Eighth Circuit was a sort of friend and chum of Lincoln; they spent many gay hours together. Ward Hill

Lamon, the Danville law partner of Lincoln, was a young Virginian of dauntless personal courage, bull-necked, melodious, tall, commanding, aristocratic, and, men said, magnificent in the amount of whisky he could carry and still pronounce the sentence, "She stood at the gate welcoming him in." Horses, women, jewelry, music, sashes of yellow and scarlet silk, the tokens of civilization after it has arrived and ripened into the overripe, had their appeal, their register of enthusiasm with him. His black hair and black mustache, the shine and the daring of him, had reminders of troubadours. The first time he and Lincoln met at Danville, Lamon wore a swallow-tailed coat, white neckcloth, and ruffled silk shirt, and Lincoln said: "Going to try your hand at the law, are you? I don't think you would succeed at splitting rails." As the years had passed a strange bond of loyalty between the two men grew stronger and was known to other men. "Sing me a little song," was Lincoln's word to Lamon, who brought out a banjo and struck up some nonsensical and rapid staccato such as "Cousin Sally Downard," or "I'll bet my money on de bobtail nag; somebody bet on de bay." Or a sailor chantey made over by mountaineers into—

De ol' black bull kem down de medder,
Husen Johnnie, Husen Johnnie!
De ol' black bull kem down de medder,
Long time ago.

Fust he paw an' den he beller,
Husen Johnnie, Husen Johnnie!
Fust he paw an' den he beller,
Long time ago.

He shake his tail, he jar de ribber,
Husen Johnnie, Husen Johnnie!
He shake his tail, he jar de ribber,
Long time ago.

He paw de dirt in de heifers' faces,
Husen Johnnie, Husen Johnnie!
He paw de dirt in de heifers' faces,
Long time ago.

Long time ago, long time ago,
De ol' black bull kem down de medder,
Long time ago.

The ballad of "The Blue-tailed Fly" was a favorite of Lincoln's. Two of its verses ran:

When I was young I used to wait
At Massa's table, 'n' hand de plate,
An' pass de bottle when he was dry,
An' brush away de blue-tailed fly.

Ol' massa's dead; oh, let him rest!
Dey say all things am for de best;
But I can't forget until I die
Ol' massa an' de blue-tailed fly.

At interludes the singer gave the buzzing sound of a fly. Of a different vein was a parody of "A Life on the Ocean Wave," as Lamon sang it for Lincoln. One verse had the lines:

Oh, a life on the ocean wave,
And a home on the rolling deep!
With ratlins fried three times a day,
And a leaky old berth for to sleep;
Where the graybeard cockroach roams,
On thoughts of kind intent,
And the raving bedbug comes
The road the cockroach went.

And in "The Lament of the Irish Emigrant," his favorite verse was:

I'm lonely now, Mary,
For the poor make no new friends;
But, oh, they love the better still
The few our Father sends!
And you were all I had, Mary,
My blessing and my pride;
There's nothing left to care for now,
Since my poor Mary died.

The close friendship of Lincoln and Lamon was talked about among the other lawyers. Lamon was considered a second-rate lawyer, a scholar of still lower rating, and in politics and on the slavery question leaning toward the southern Illinois point of view rather than the northern. He was born two miles north of Winchester in the Shenandoah Valley from which Lincoln's grandfather had moved to Kentucky. He was preëminently the Good Fellow, with the grasshopper rather than the ant for his model, openly pagan; he translated the fleshpots of Egypt into the pork chops of Illinois; he was as independent in manner as young Joseph G. Cannon, slated in Danville to follow Lamon as state's attorney of Vermilion County; morals are morals but a pitcher of beer is beer; out of one somewhat like Lamon Shakespeare built Falstaff; he was Elizabethan, Hogarthian, with heavy jowls, slumbrous, dangerous eyes, and the intrepidity of famous cavalrymen. He was nineteen years younger than Lincoln, had served four years as a state's attorney, and had been sketched as "chivalrous, courageous, generous, of unquestioned integrity, inclined to be conservative"; and, "His social qualities upon intimate acquaintance are of the finest type." Yet the comment of good friends of Lincoln was that his companionship with Lamon proved that Lincoln had "a certain degree of moral obtuseness."

For driving away a spell of melancholy, probably the best friend of Lincoln was this man Lamon, whom he called Hill. Whether it was music or women or a roistering gayety he wanted for a dark mood, he treasured and kept the companionship of the reckless and romantic Hill Lamon, eater and drinker, with the swagger of a picture-book swashbuckler out of a pirate story, but a personal loyalty of tried fighting quality.

Women, music, poetry, art, science, and pure speculative philosophy, all requiring lazy days with no tumults in the near-by dusty streets and roads: to them all Lincoln's answer was spoken in the quaint gingerbread story, the Indiana boy blurting out mournfully, "Abe, I don't s'pose there's anybody on earth likes gingerbread better'n I do—and gets less'n I do."

Chapter 136

Frances Affonsa, the black-eyed Portuguese woman who used to do the family washing for the Lincolns, had stayed on and become the regular cook. Her man, Manuel de Fraita, who said he would sometime take her for a bride, used to come to see her. They often had supper together in the kitchen, looking off in the direction of the Great Western depot.

Frances was a good woman and a good cook. The Lincolns liked her cooking and hoped she would stay many years. When Frances was asked how she got along with Mrs. Lincoln, she answered: "If I please Mis' Lincum, she like me, she treat me very well; and she very hard to please, but I please her." And that would about hit off what the husband in the house had learned about getting along with his wife. If he pleased her, she liked him, she treated him very well. And often she was very hard to please, but he pleased her.

Frances Affonsa heard the husband and wife exchange words one day. As she told it, what they said was:

Mrs. Lincoln: You're a very smart man, Mr. Lincoln.

Mr. Lincoln: Well, what have I done now?

Mrs. L.: Why, you have put your coat on top of my fresh starched gowns.

Mr. L.: Never mind, don't be cross. I'll take my coat away and hang your gowns over it.

As the years had passed they had learned to be more accommodating to each other, though each was so independent and their personalities were so different on important matters that often the marriage ship was in the troughs. There were stories in the talk and gossip of the town. Lincoln had been seen splitting wood at one o'clock in the morning. Hadn't he been turned out of his own house and come home when the rest of the family was in bed, to get his own supper alone in peace? Ah-h, said the tongues, that must be the explanation.

Herndon knew that his partner had come to the office sometimes at seven o'clock in the morning when the usual hour for him to arrive was nine o'clock. And in his hands at noon Lincoln had brought to the office a package of grocery crackers and cheese, and sat alone eating. The tongues in some quarters still had it that Mary Todd married him to wreak vengeance on him for not showing up on the date first set for their marriage ceremony.

Mrs. Lincoln and Herndon hated each other. He traced back to Patrick Henry stock, while she was of Covenanter offspring. And they never get along. His first compliment to her, that she danced with the grace of a serpent, was a slip from the code by which she demanded to be treated. While Herndon was careless as to where he spat, she was not merely scrupulously neat, nor merely immaculate as to linen and baths; she was among the most ambitious women in Springfield in the matter of style and fashion; she wished to be not merely agreeable and attractive, but a stunning triumph.

On such occasions as she called at the Lincoln & Herndon law office, she would walk from the door straight to the desk of Lincoln and speak with him. She might nod pleasantly to Henry B. Rankin or another law student. But she wouldn't even look toward Herndon; he was off her speaking list. The natural clash of these two temperaments and characters hadn't been helped by the fact that when the Republicans got control of the state offices in 1856, Herndon was appointed a bank examiner at a nice salary, while her husband went on dividing his fees half and half with Herndon, Lincoln being the one who earned the big fees, such as the $5,000.00 from the Illinois Central Railroad.

Mrs. Lincoln knew Herndon as an Abolitionist hothead; she knew his father had called him home from Illinois College because he had got deep into the Garrisonian doctrines; she knew definitely or had sure intuitions about Herndon's wanting to raise cash for rifles to send to Kansas besides his interest in other schemes for open combat with proslavery forces. She had told Ward Hill Lamon ten years back: "Mr. Lincoln is to be President

of the United States some day; if I had not thought so I would not have married him, for you can see he is not pretty." And she felt the radical, unsteady Herndon a menace to all her dreams of her husband advancing. If Lincoln had not been the stronger and shaping personal force with Herndon, he would have been linked to political factions that would have smothered all of Mrs. Lincoln's ambitions.

She knew of such affairs as Herndon getting drunk with two other men and breaking a windowpane that her husband had to hustle the money for so that the sheriff wouldn't lock up his law partner. She didn't like it that her husband had a partner who was too easy about women and whisky, reckless with money, and occasionally touching Lincoln for loans. She didn't like it that Herndon could sometimes completely misunderstand Lincoln, as at the time Lincoln had to write from Washington asking Herndon to read his Mexican War speeches before taking the explanations of Democrats in Springfield as to how he stood on the war. At that time it looked as though Herndon had gone on a spree and was not giving his partner, so far away, ready sympathy and quick coöperation. With Herndon more on the job, and a better home guard, reporting home developments and trends of sentiment as rapidly and fully as Lincoln had done for his partner, Stuart, when Stuart was in Congress, it might have been that Lincoln's Mexican War policy as congressman wouldn't have been as muddled for the home folks as it was. Mrs. Lincoln carried suspicions and nursed misgivings of that kind.

Mrs. Lincoln would have preferred to have her husband in partnership with a kindly, mellow, easy-going scholar such as Orville H. Browning, a Kentucky gentleman of the old school, a compendium of gracious manners and fine codes. Instead there was the tavern-bred son of a tavern keeper, a swaggering upstart and interloper, radical in politics, transcendentalist in philosophy, anti-church, and calling himself an infidel as to the divinity of Christ, the Trinity of the Godhead, and the divine revelation of the Bible.

Mrs. Lincoln's instinct for politics, her views of current events,

her shifting flickers of temperament, were intermingled in a letter she wrote to her sister in Kentucky at the close of the 1856 campaign when the new Republican party had taken Illinois but had lost with its national ticket headed by Frémont. She wrote: "Your husband, like the rest of ours, has a great taste for politics and has taken much interest in the late contest, which has resulted very much as I expected, not hoped. Although Mr. Lincoln is, or was, a Frémont man, you must not include him with so many of those who belong to that party, an Abolitionist. In principle he is far from it. All he desires is that slavery shall not be extended, let it remain where it is. My weak woman's heart was too Southern in feeling to sympathize with any but Fillmore. I have always been a great admirer of his—he made so good a president, and is so good a man, and feels the necessity of keeping foreigners within bounds. If some of you Kentuckians had to deal with the wild Irish as we housekeepers are sometimes called upon to do, the South would certainly elect Fillmore next time. The Democrats have been defeated in our state in their governor, so there is a crumb of comfort for each and all. What day is so dark that there is no ray of sunshine to penetrate the gloom? Now, sit down and write one of your agreeable missives, and do not wait for a return of each staid matron, and, moreover, the mother of three noisy boys."

Thus the wife wrote, a few months after the Lincoln Lost Speech, in which he set a convention on fire telling them to use bullets only after ballots had failed, and crying, "Blood will flow and brother's hand be raised against brother!" His wife was enthusiastic about Fillmore, "so good a president," "so good a man," and had told Lincoln about the goodness of Fillmore before he heard of it from the young man whom he advised to "vote for Almighty God" as being perfect in goodness and far surpassing Millard Fillmore in goodness.

Thus while the husband had campaigned for John C. Frémont, facing hostile audiences that, as at Petersburg, hooted him and tried to howl him down, the wife favored Millard Fillmore.

At parties, balls, social gatherings, she moved, vital, sparkling,

often needlessly insinuating or directly and swiftly insolent. If the music was bad, what was the need of her making unkind remarks about the orchestra? Was it not to be expected that the remarks would circulate and word be sent back to her that the orchestra was not playing for her but for the colored maid?

On her desk stood an inkstand, carved of walnut wood, in the shape of an ear of corn. Each end had an inkwell. Between was a music box. An inscription read, "Mary Lincoln."

Lighted candles in a still, dark room clothed her with invisible consolations not to be derived from the windows facing south on Eighth Street. Chills, headaches, creepers of fear came at her; misunderstandings rose in waves so often around her; she was alone, so all alone, so like a child thrust into the Wrong Room. She chose three candelabra; on each was the figure of a woman seated with her head resting in the elbow of a man's right arm. Attached to a three-candle one were ten pendent prisms of glass where flowers and stars of light ran in rainbow tints. Here was excellence—even in the Wrong Room.

At parties, balls, social gatherings, she trod the mazy waltzes in crinoline gowns, the curves of the hoop skirts shading down the plump curves of her physical figure as if fashion were cooperating to set off her lines to advantage. With middle age coming on she had spoken less often, in society, of the certainty of her husband going to the White House eventually. But there were those who recollected her replying to the remark that Mr. Lincoln seemed to be a great favorite: "Yes, he is a great favorite everywhere. He is to be President of the United States some day. Look at him! Doesn't he look as if he would make a magnificent President?" Once when talk had turned to a comparison of Lincoln and Douglas, she had said, "Mr. Lincoln may not be as handsome a figure, but people are perhaps not aware that his heart is as large as his arms are long."

Lincoln gave his wife a 234-page book in blackboard covers, entitled "The Elements of Character," by Mary G. Chandler. He marked a passage on page 222 with lead pencil. "This union, so sacred that it even supersedes that which exists between

parent and child, should be entered upon only from the purest and highest motives; and then, let worldly prosperity come and go as it may, this twain whom God has joined, not by a mere formal ritual of the Church, but by a true spiritual union that man cannot put asunder, are a heaven unto themselves, and peace will ever dwell within their habitation. In proportion as a true marriage of the affections between the pure in heart is productive of the highest happiness that can exist on earth, so every remove from it diminishes the degree of this happiness until it passes into the opposite, and becomes, in its most worldly and selfish form, a fountain of misery, of a quality absolutely infernal."

The two sentences immediately following, and not marked, read: "Amid the disorder and imperfection reigning in the world, it is not to be supposed that a large proportion of marriages should be truly heavenly. In order to arrive at this, both parties must be of a higher moral standing than is often ready at an age when marriage is usually entered upon; but unless the character of each is inclined heavenward, there is no rational ground for anticipating happiness, except of the lowest kind."

Mary Todd and Abe Lincoln had good times together. How often these good times shone for them, when the ship sailed an even moonlit sea, only they two could tell. They were intense and special individuals, he having come through a siege of hypochondria which he referred to by the abbreviation of "hypo," and she moving by circling swirls toward a day when she would cry out that hammers were knocking nails into her head, that hot wires were being drawn through her eyes. They had by multiplied specific actions drawn into a tighter area, into a closer-welded definition, the meaning of the slogan that Chatterton, the jeweler, so long ago had engraved inside the plain gold band of a wedding-ring he had put on her hand. "Love is eternal." Concretely across years the man had given the woman his explanation of what his intentions were in writing to Joshua Speed as to marriage, the words of old Tom Lincoln, "If you make a bad bargain, hug it all the tighter." Between flare-ups and clashes, between collisions and regrets, the spirit of accommo-

dation rose and offered a way out. To be strangers was to be enemies; to be free with communications was to lead toward understanding. Perhaps accommodation was a finer and surer word than Love; certainly it had been soiled less with the lies of hypocrites. He was ten years older than she, with a toiling talent for conciliatory adjustment, a strict genius in the decisions of human accommodation. So he led.

The rules of philosophy which he tried to practice, at home and away from home, were, in his own words: "Quarrel not at all. No man resolved to make the most of himself can spare time for personal contention. Still less can he afford to take all the consequences, including the vitiating of his temper and the loss of self-control. Yield larger things to which you can show no more than equal right; and yield lesser ones, though clearly your own." So he took his coat from where it lay on top of her starched gowns, thus yielding his lesser right. For occasions possibly violent his counsel was: "Better give your path to a dog than be bitten by him in contesting for the right. Even killing the dog would not cure the bite."

Hours of pleasant reconciliations were in Whitney's mind when he said: "Lincoln loved his wife—I had many reasons to know this."

They had good times together, days when she made herself pretty for him, wanting him, and he willing. One picture for which she posed after fifteen years of marriage shows dark curly ringlets of hair spaced into cunning arrangements down her temples and about her ears, a little necklace circling her bare neck, three roses at her bosom, and a lily carried in her hands. On the hands were shapely, tapering fingers, of smooth proportions, curious hands to be found on one who did the household marketing and took care of three noisy boys she had raised herself.

She wrote to her sister in the autumn of 1857: "The summer has strangely and rapidly passed away. Some portion of it was spent most pleasantly in traveling East. We visited Niagara, Canada, New York and other points of interest. When I saw

the large steamers at the New York landing, ready for their European voyage, I felt in my heart inclined to sigh that poverty was my portion. I often laugh and tell Mr. Lincoln that my next husband shall be rich."

She could pronounce on her husband such fine judgments as: "He never joined a church, but still he was a religious man. But it was a kind of poetry in his nature, and he never was a technical Christian."

The roots and the elements of their two lives ran darkly into hidden ways and subtle crypts of life. Much of the gossip about the Lincoln house ran on the theory that in every house there is either a master-man or a henpecked husband, either a domineering woman or a doormat. Both gossip and science have little to guide them in effecting a true and searching explanation of the married life of a slow-going wilderness bear and a cultivated tempestuous wildcat.

Some of the gossip rested on solid foundations of fact. Mrs. Lincoln had once discharged, on short notice and with sharp words, a girl in her employ. The uncle of the girl came to ask about it. Mrs. Lincoln met him at the door, excited, blazing, gesticulating, and sent him away with his ears burning from a torrent of short, picked adjectives. He hunted up Lincoln, finding the politician in a store on the public square, discussing the news of the day and enjoying a crowd of fellow citizens. He stepped into the store, with his ears still burning, and called for Lincoln, who came and listened. When the man had finished telling his grievance, Lincoln said he was sorry to hear what had been told him, he wanted to be reasonable and fair, but he would ask a question; it amounted to asking, "If I have had to stand this every day for fifteen years, don't you think you can stand it a few minutes one day?" The uncle would have laughed if Lincoln had laughed. But Lincoln's face was mournful, slack, worn. It was no laughing matter even with a man who had a knack of laughter. The uncle apologized. The two men parted as friends.

As this scandalous morsel of gossip traveled, the identity of

the abused man who came to Lincoln took many forms. It was the iceman who had a spat on the back doorstep of the Lincoln house, and met Lincoln and sympathized with him at the front porch. Or it was a groceryman who was accused of delivering decayed tomatoes, or a carpenter who had been told by Mrs. Lincoln that he didn't know a hawk from a handsaw. The incident, however, was not merely a morsel of gossip, as it traveled. It was also a piece of folklore, old as the human family, the Lincolns entirely insignificant figures in it. On any day when he had met unkind words from his wife at the breakfast table, every man in Illinois who knew the story took comfort in picturing Lincoln, saying, "If I have had to stand this every day for fifteen years, don't you think you can stand it a few minutes one day?" It was a farce with a moral. Men and their wives and children told the story with a relish; in all homes something a little like it had happened; that was why they enjoyed and understood it. In fact, sometimes the end of such incidents when repeated was separation of man and wife by divorce. They liked the Lincolns better for it; it was common and human.

What went on behind the doors and window blinds of the two-story cottage at the corner of Eighth and Jackson streets was the secret of those who lived in it, except as occasionally little accidental events revealed a momentary glint of the mirrors and a fleeting glimpse of part of the secret. Such little accidental events were rare. One was the necessary writing by Lincoln of an explanation to the editor of a Springfield newspaper. The letter was marked "Private," was dated at Springfield, February 20, 1857, addressed to John E. Rosette, Esq., and read, in full:

Dear Sir:—

Your note about the little paragraph in the *Republican* was received yesterday, since which time I have been too unwell to notice it. I had not supposed you wrote or approved it. The whole originated in mistake. You know by the conversation with me that I thought the establishment of the newspaper unfortunate, but I always expected to throw no obstacle in its way, and to patronize it to the extent of taking it

and paying for one copy. When the paper was brought to my house, my wife said to me, "Now are you going to take another worthless little paper?" I said to her *evasively*, "I have not directed the paper to be left." From this, in my absence, she sent the message to the carrier. This is the whole story.

Yours truly,
A. LINCOLN.

There was another story, quite different. A lawyer was talking business to Lincoln once at the home. Suddenly the door opened and Mrs. Lincoln put her head in and snapped out the question whether he had done an errand she told him to do. He looked up quietly, said he had been busy, but would attend to it as soon as he could. Words came wailing rapidly from Mrs. Lincoln that she was a neglected, abused, insulted woman. The door slammed; she was gone. The visiting lawyer looked at Lincoln open-eyed, and muttered his surprise. Lincoln laughed it off, "Why, if you knew how much good that little eruption did, what a relief it was to her, how she really enjoyed it, and if you knew her as well as I do, you would be glad she had had an opportunity to explode, to give vent to her feelings." This was not so good a story, not so quizzical an incident, and did not spread so far.

Once on a Sunday, Lincoln in his shirt-sleeves had two of his boys in a little wagon which he was pulling behind him as he walked back and forth in front of his house. His chin sunk to his bosom, he was thinking about history, discoveries, inventions, politics, when a passer-by picked him by the sleeve and told him one of the boys had spilled out of the wagon onto the sidewalk. Just then Mrs. Lincoln, coming home from church, saw what had happened, and set up a crying that could be heard at the next corner. Lincoln took a few long steps toward the house and the front door shut behind him. Thus one tale. Another had to do with an ink spot on his desk. A bottle had spilled over —and Mrs. Lincoln had pushed the desk out of the house.

Twice Mrs. Lincoln sent one of the boys to call Lincoln to dinner from a game of chess with Judge Treat; the third time

the boy lined up where he could get foot action, and kicked the chessboard, kings, queens, pawns, and all, into the air. The father acted as if chessboards were made to be kicked into the air, took the boy's hand, smiled to Judge Treat, "I reckon we'll have to finish this game some other time," went to dinner and left Judge Treat puffing at the gills, with mussed-up dignity. When asked his opinion of Mrs. Lincoln, Judge Treat said he could name people who could tell about her, "if they dared to."

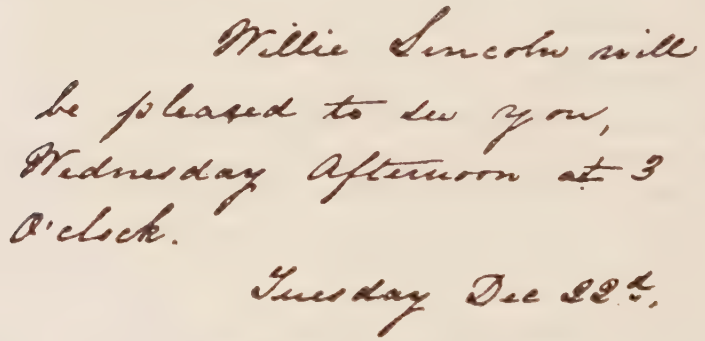
During six months of the year Lincoln was off practicing law on the Eighth Circuit. Other lawyers, starting home at the week-ends, to spend Sunday with their wives and families, noticed that Lincoln didn't join them; they mentioned it to each other; it was sort of quietly agreed that the home life of Lincoln was not all that Lincoln would wish it; Milton Hay, a lawyer with an office on the same floor as Lincoln, used to philosophize that if Lincoln's home life hadn't sent him out over the state, with free spare hours to think for himself and to build up circles of friends that were a political asset, Lincoln wouldn't have become the powerful political manipulator that he was in the new controlling party of the Northwest.

Though the tales gathered and spread about Lincoln being a henpecked husband, his wife's conversation about him among the well-to-do and socially and politically powerful people gave the impression that she was proud of him and he had a genius that would take him farther than any man in Illinois. She joked about his failings, and defended his peculiarities. She would say: "He is of no account when he is at home. He never does anything except to warm himself and read. He never went to market in his life; I have to look after all that. He just does nothing. He is the most useless, good-for-nothing man on earth." But if somebody else had said Lincoln was the most useless, good-for-nothing man on earth, "I would have scratched his eyes out," she flashed. "But really, he is so absorbed with his law, his anecdotes, his reading, and what not, that he is of little use at home." And could one suppose that he never gave his wife any money? "Money!" was Mrs. Lincoln's exclama-

tion. "He never gives me any money—he leaves his pocketbook where I can take what I want."

She bought calico, cambric, muslin, oil cloth, cassimere at C. M. Smith's store; she sent Bob for ten-pound lots of sugar and Smith would enter on his books, "per Bob 10 pds Sugar $1.00"; or it might be six dozen eggs and Smith would write, "per son 6 doz. Eggs $.50." She bought candles, wood, buttons, thread, year on year managing. She bought silk, silk and luster, silk lining, plaid silk, silk lining and crêpe, silk mitts, gaiter boots, kid boots from Smith for herself. Also she picked from Smith's stock for her husband such items as "1 shirt $2.75," "1 silk cravat $1.60," and Smith wrote one entry, "Jents Stock $1.25." On April 26, 1859, Smith wrote, "per lady Silk Hat $5.00," and four days later a second entry, "per lady, for difference in exchange Hats $.50."

She was often anxious about her boys, had mistaken fears about their safety or health, exaggerated evils that might befall them. She gave parties for them and wrote with her own pen, in a smooth and even script, gracious invitations such as one received by six-year-old Isaac Diller, reading, "Willie Lincoln will be pleased to see you, Wednesday Afternoon at 3 O'clock."


Willie Lincoln will
be pleased to see you,
Wednesday Afternoon at 3
O'clock.

Tuesday Dec 22d.

Mrs. Lincoln writes to little Isaac Diller.

Between Mrs. Lincoln and Herndon fire flashed as flint upon flint. Each had peculiar personal pride. When the Republicans

carried Illinois for the first time, Herndon wrote to Parker: "I commenced early in our county and spoke on every stump and in every church and schoolhouse therein, and thus carried our county by a larger majority than ever before. I turned my office into a kind of war office, took the young, active men there and got them to take an interest in favor of human liberty, human rights. You know my position here, I suppose, as a lawyer and a man; and if I had any earthly influence let me assure you that I moved this class as intensely as I could." If Parker believed what Herndon told him, then his impression was that Herndon single-handed set the prairies on fire and swept Sangamon County for the Republican ticket.

As Mrs. Lincoln and Bill Herndon came and went, holding their spites, young Henry B. Rankin, the sober, scrupulous, religious-minded law student, formed his impressions as to who was to blame. He was a reader of the Bible and of Walt Whitman's "Leaves of Grass," and as far as he could figure it out nobody was to blame. Mary Todd had married a genius who made demands; when he wanted to work, to isolate himself with every brain cell operating, he demanded to be let alone; it was no time for interruptions or errands. It was for this brooding man she was wife, housekeeper, and counselor in personal and political affairs in so far as he permitted. She watched his habits of "browsing around" in the pantry, and of skipping meals, and tried to bring him to regular eating habits. She advised with Dr. Wallace and other friends about Lincoln's tendency to consumption; they agreed to watch him closely but say nothing, as the fear of it might haunt Lincoln.

She did the shopping, picked out such things as the black satin haircloth rocking-chair in the parlor, the mahogany and haircloth sofa, the low-slung black-walnut sofa. She had kept house eighteen years before, too poor for a hired girl; they burned wood then; now they had a coal cookstove with four lids and a reservoir to warm rain water. She had chosen the beautiful, strong black-walnut cradle, into which she had put four boy babies; when one had died, the father had written to his step-

brother: "We lost our little boy. It was not our *first* but our second child. We miss him very much."

Fourteen years after her marriage she was keeping up her readings in the French language. She was not satisfied with a translation of a speech by Victor Hugo on capital punishment, published in the *Southern Literary Messenger*. She insisted on getting a copy of the speech in French, for the purpose, as she told Henry Rankin, "the better to show the strength of Hugo's oratory and the difficulty of translating into English a French oration of such intense feeling so as to preserve the true Hugo fire and force."

In bidding good night to a guest at their home, on one occasion, Mrs. Lincoln had stepped out on the front porch. The night sky was a dome of clear stars. She looked up and spoke of what a wonderful display it was; she named several planets and pointed to constellations, and explained that certain stars are suns far larger than our sun, and the centre of universes immensely larger than ours. Her interest in the stars and her talk about them was somewhat like that of Lincoln when he was at the Judd home in Chicago.

Chapter 137

LINCOLN was fifty-one years old. With each year of his life since he had become a grown man, his name and ways, and stories about him, had been spreading farther and farther among plain people and their children.

So tall, with so peculiar a slouch and so easy a saunter, so bony and sad, so quizzical and comic, sort of hiding a funny lantern that lighted and went out and that he lighted again—he was the Strange Friend and he was the Friendly Stranger.

Like something out of a picture book for children—he was. His form of slumping arches and his face of gaunt sockets were a shape a Great Artist had scrawled from careless clay, and was going to throw away, and then had said: "No, this one is to

be kept; for a long time this one is to be kept; I made it by accident but it is better than many made on purpose."

He looked like an original plan for an extra-long horse or a lean tawny buffalo, that a Changer had suddenly whisked into a man-shape. Or he met the eye as a clumsy, mystical giant that had walked out of a Chinese or Russian fairy story, or a bogy who had stumbled out of an ancient Saxon myth with a handkerchief full of presents he wanted to divide among all the children in the world.

He didn't wear clothes. Rather, clothes hung upon him as if on a rack to dry, or on a loose ladder up a wind-swept chimney. He had clothes to keep the chill or the sun off. His clothes seemed to whisper, "He put us on when he was thinking about something else."

The stovepipe hat sort of whistled softly: "I am not a hat at all; I am the little garret roof where he tucks in little thoughts he writes on pieces of paper."

The umbrella with the name "Abraham Lincoln" stitched in, faded and drab from many rains and regular travels, looked sort of sleepy and murmuring. "Sometime we shall have all the sleep we want; we shall turn the law office over to the spiders and the cobwebs; and we shall quit politics for keeps."

People joked him on being so tall. "You're a man to look up to." In his way he belonged to the west country as Robert Burns belonged to Scotland or Hans Christian Andersen to North Europe.

Almost there were times when children and dreamers looked at Abraham Lincoln and lazily drew their eyelids half shut and let their hearts roam about him—and they half-believed him to be a tall horse-chestnut tree or a rangy horse or a big wagon or a log barn full of new-mown hay—something else or more than a man, a lawyer, a Republican candidate with principles, a prominent citizen—something spreading, elusive, and mysterious—he was the Strange Friend and he was the Friendly Stranger.

The stovepipe hat he wore had a brim one and three-quarters inches wide. The inside band in which edges of the more im-

portant letters and notes were tucked, measured two and three-quarters inches. The cylinder of the stovepipe was twenty-two inches in circumference. The hat was lined with heavy silk and measured inside, exactly six inches deep. And people tried to guess what was going on under that hat.

Written in pencil on the imitation satin paper that formed part of the lining of the hat was the signature "A. Lincoln, Springfield, Ill.," so that any forgetful person who might take the hat by mistake would know where to bring it back. Also the hatmaker, "George Hall, Springfield, Ill.," had printed his name in the hat so that Lincoln would know where to get another one just like it.

People sketched his form and look, as D. W. Wilder of Hiawatha, Kansas, did in telling how he and Lincoln sat on the river bank at St. Joseph, waiting for the ferryboat. "Lincoln had legs you could fold up; the knees stood out like that high and hind joint of the Kansas grasshopper; the buttons were off his shirt as when I saw him the summer before."

He had talked with a man on the Danville road, while sharpening his knife on the man's whetstone. They had been standing at a barnyard gate. And after Lincoln was gone, the farmer looked high and low, but couldn't find his whetstone. Lincoln had reached up and put the whetstone on top of a high gatepost, where it was found years afterward. But during those years the people at that farmhouse "allowed as maybe Abe Lincoln took that whetstone along with him."

In Pittsfield, Lizzie Gillmer was swinging on the front gate as Lincoln came out of the Gillmer house. And he took hold of Lizzie, swung her high in the air, kissed her, and put her back on the gate. And in the same town, Susan Scanland had her opinion of Lincoln. "The laziest man there ever was, good for nothing except to tell stories," said she emphatically. She had fixed a turkey dinner for Lincoln and other men-folks, and six o'clock came and half-past six, and the dinner went cold, because Lincoln was spinning yarns for a crowd of men at a drug store. In Havana, Milton Logan, a juror in the Armstrong

case, told his family and other families, that Lincoln addressed the jury, "Gentlemen, I appear here without any reward, for the benefit of that lady sitting there"—pointing at Hannah Armstrong—"who washed my dirty shirts when I had no money to pay her." And Lincoln, when he had freed Duff Armstrong of the murder charge, had said, "Duff, go home and be a good boy now, and don't get into any more scrapes."

The year of the big debates a boy had called out, "There goes old Mr. Lincoln," and Lincoln hearing it, remarked to a friend, "They commenced it when I was scarcely thirty years old."

Often when people called him "Old Abe" they meant he had the texture and quaint friendliness of old handmade Bibles, old calfskin law books, weather-beaten oak and walnut planks, or wagon axles always willing in storm or stars.

A neighbor boy, Fred Dubois, joined with a gang who tied a string to knock off Lincoln's hat. "Letters and papers fell out of the hat and scattered over the sidewalk," said Dubois. "He stooped to pick them up and us boys climbed all over him."

In many a prairie cabin by candlelight as the snowdrifts piled, and another crock of apples was passed to those who sat by the wood fire, the tale had been told of Abe Lincoln driving a two-horse team on a road heavy with mud. It was sunset time and Abe had his back to the sunset. And he met another driver with a two-horse wagon. Both knew that whoever turned out would be up to the hubs in mud, almost sure to get stuck in the mud. "Turn out," the other fellow called. "Turn out yourself," called Abe. The other fellow refused. Then Abe, with his back to the sunset, began to rise from his seat in the wagon, rising and rising, his tall shape getting longer and longer against the setting sun, as he was saying, "If you don't turn out I'll tell you what I'll do." And the other fellow hollered: "Don't go any higher. I'll turn out." And after he had struggled through and passed by Lincoln, he called back, "Say, what would you have done if I hadn't turned out?" Lincoln answered, "I'd 've turned out myself."

He would get on a train alone, pass a few words with men

at the wood stove in the end of a car, find a seat up front by himself, arrange his legs and arms so no part of him stuck out into the aisle, fold over him the blue cloak he got in Washington after the Mexican War, and sleep.

As a young man he played marbles with boys; as an older man he spun tops with his own boys, Tad and Willie. When William Plato of Kane County came to his office with the little girl, Ella, he stood Ella on a chair and told her, "And you're not as tall as I am, even now."

A girl skipping along a sidewalk stumbled on a brick and fell backward, just as Lincoln came along and caught her, lifted her up in his arms, put her gently down and asked, "What is your name?" "Mary Tuft." "Well, Mary, when you reach home tell your mother you have rested in Abraham's bosom."

In many a courthouse, railroad depot, and drug store, the pithy anecdote had been told of the justice of the peace in Pekin who was elected circuit judge and often, when he wasn't sure about the law or the authorities, would say, "I don't know about that." And one day when Lincoln had cited the law and the authorities, he kept repeating and emphasizing to Lincoln, "I don't know about that, I don't know about that." Lincoln had looked the judge in the eye and said, "I *knew* your Honor didn't know about it and that's why I told you."

The caboose in which he was riding once during the debates with Douglas, was put on a sidetrack, while the special train and private car of Douglas whizzed by and faded. And Lincoln laughed, "I guess they smelt no royalty in our carriage." In Rushville and towns circling around, they remembered the day he was there. The whole town turned out, among them young women of Rushville society, as such. One of the belles dangled a little negro doll baby in Lincoln's face. He looked into her face and asked quietly, "Madam, are you the mother of that?" At many a corn shucking and Saturday night shindig, this incident had been told of. And likewise the one about the time he got on a train in Bloomington, after wrangling with a jury all day, and as the train got going he had turned around in

his seat and told William Nichols of Bloomington, "There are two things even God Almighty doesn't know, how an Illinois jury will decide, and who a widow will marry."

As he got into an omnibus that had seen better days, he took a seat and began wheezing a tune on a mouth organ. Whitney asked the why of it. "This is my band; Douglas had a brass band with him in Peoria; but this will do me." He carried books in a handkerchief bundle. He met a weeping woman who was going to miss a train because her trunk had not been hauled to the depot; and Lincoln put the trunk on his shoulders, they met the train in time, and the woman told everybody on the train about it. He dressed any which way at times, in broadcloth, a silk hat, a silk choker, and a flaming red silk handkerchief, so that one court clerk said Lincoln was "fashionably dressed, as neatly attired as any lawyer at court, except Ward Lamon." Or again, people said Lincoln looked like a huge skeleton with skin over the bones, and clothes covering the skin.

"How tall is your wife?" he was asked in Menard County. He held his right arm straight out and said his wife could just stand under his arm. And it was told that when he was asked why the Todd name was spelled with two d's he said he guessed one "d" was enough for God, but the Todds needed two.

News was brought him one day by Tom McNeeley of Petersburg, who had been down in Mississippi and witnessed an exhibition of the taming of wild horses by Denton Offut. Offut would take a misbehaving horse, whisper in its ear and get it quiet, and then for five dollars would sell to a farmer the magic word to be whispered in the horse's ear. Offut had asked about old Petersburg and New Salem, and wished to send a special message to Lincoln. "Tell it just as Offut said it," Lincoln told McNeeley. And the message was advice. "Tell Lincoln to get out of his rascally business of law and politics, and do something honest, like taming horses." And Lincoln laughed, "That's Offut, that's just like Offut."

Two men were carrying on an old feud of their Kentucky families. One called the other a shameful name, and the other

knocked him down with the blade of a hoe. Lincoln, defending the assailant, told a jury: "The important thing is that our client had a hoe instead of a revolver. It is not the day when a man can invade the property of another and apply epithets without the weight of a blow."

The "gingerbread story," which he had mentioned without telling, in one of the debates with Douglas, touched young and old. Lincoln had been asked why he seemed to have so little of the companionship of women and whether he had no pleasure from their society. "When we lived in Indiana," he said, "once in a while my mother used to get some sorghum and ginger and make some gingerbread. It wasn't often, and it was our biggest treat. One day I smelled the gingerbread and came into the house to get my share while it was still hot. My mother had baked me three gingerbread men. I took them out under a hickory tree to eat them. There was a family near us poorer than we were, and their boy came along as I sat down. 'Abe,' he said, 'gimme a man?' I gave him one. He crammed it into his mouth in two bites and looked at me while I was biting the legs off my first one. 'Abe,' he said, 'gimme that other'n.' I wanted it myself, but I gave it to him and as it followed the first, I said to him, 'You seem to like gingerbread.' 'Abe,' he said, 'I don't s'pose anybody on earth likes gingerbread better'n I do—and gets less'n I do.' "

Where he got his stories, how they would start or finish, no one could tell. "When hunting for wit he had no ability to discriminate vulgar and refined substance," said Swett, "it was the wit he was after and he would pick it up out of the mud or dirt just as readily as from a parlor table."

Old Æsop could not have invented a better fable than the one about the snakes in the bed, to show the harm of letting slavery into the new territories. "If there was a bed newly made up, to which the children were to be taken, and it was proposed to take a batch of snakes and put them there with them, I take it no man would say there was any question how I ought to decide."

That a man can tell the truth while he believes he is telling a lie, was a point Lincoln would prove in such a story as that of a negro barber in Illinois who stepped out of his shop one night to join a crowd gazing at the luminous shine of the planet Jupiter. "Sho," said the barber, "I've seen that stah befoh. I seen him way down in Georgy." Lincoln's point was, "He told the truth, but he thought he was lying."

When weathering trouble he liked to think of "Old Zach," the Mexican War hero. "General Taylor's battles were not distinguished for brilliant military maneuvers; but in all he seems to have conquered by the exercise of a sober and steady judgment, coupled with a dogged incapacity to understand that defeat was possible. He could not be flurried, and he could not be scared. He was averse to sudden and startling quarrels; and he pursued no man with revenge. It is much for the young to know that treading the hard path of duty as he trod it will be noticed, and will lead to high places."

He marked with his pencil on page 10 of "The Elements of Character" the passage reading: "A wisely trained Character never stops to ask, What will society think of me if I do this thing?" He marked also the more subtle sentence: "We are all of us perpetually liable to gross self-deception by transferring in fancy our love or our hate for the consequences of vices or virtues to the vices or virtues themselves."

His pencil drew a line on page 233 alongside this sentiment: "Let no human being think that he holds companionship with the Lord, because he loves to retire apart, to pray, or to contemplate the Divine attributes, if, at such times, he looks down upon and shuns the haunts of men." Then came the philosophy: "Every thought of self-elevation, every feeling that tends towards 'I am holier than thou,' smothers the breath of all true prayer. Neither let any one suppose himself spiritual because material life or material duties oppress him. God made the material world as a school for His children."

His thoughts dwelt on other passages he marked: "The motive power in man is Affection. What he loves he wills, and

what he wills he performs. Our Character is the complex of all that we love. . . . There is no station in life where there is not a constant demand for the exercise of Charity. We cannot be in company an hour with any person without some such demand presenting itself to us."

His mind exercised itself with such distinctions as in the case of President Polk's "open attempt to prove by telling the truth what he could not prove by telling the *whole* truth." He tinted his language with a cool, strange bittersweet at the close of a campaign in which he and his associates, as he said, had been "bespattered with every imaginable odious epithet." Though he was a leader of the state bar, he could say, "Some things legally right are morally wrong." He had sought to discipline his tongue, to make it a willing instrument to bring common understandings between the alien prejudices of northern and southern Illinois. "Shades of opinion may be sincerely entertained by honest and truthful men." To hold a right opinion on all things at all times would earn bewilderment in the end; he would leave that to Horace Greeley or Henry Ward Beecher, saying for himself, "It is better only sometimes to be right than at all times wrong." In years when he had nothing to say he said it, he crept into crypts of silence and let history work and shadows pass and repass. Then when the demand came he could step forth and talk three hours a day for a hundred days, and be fresh at the finish.

He could have said that So-and-So was "reprehensible." Instead, he remarked, "He's a bad egg." His speech was at times as natural as a horse flicking its ear to shoo a fly. First-rate grammarians shivered at his commenting on a problematical issue, "Oh, that'll be got along with."

His published speeches did not always register a certain plain manner of address which he used. The *Sycamore True Republican* editor wrote of Lincoln as saying in the House Divided speech, "He *don't*"; often before final and corrected speeches were published he was recorded as saying "He don't" or "It don't." He had spoken of the "bosses" of the plan for slavery

extension, according to first reports; this later appeared as "chief architects" instead of "bosses."

One who heard him reply to Douglas at Peoria reported Lincoln as saying: "He thought he could approach an argument and at times believed he could make one; but when one denied the settled and plainest facts of history, you could not argue with him: the only thing you could do would be *to stop his mouth with a corn cob.*"

He could be humble in different ways, telling the Wisconsin farmers that the privilege of addressing them was "an honor for which I make my profound and grateful acknowledgment," or saying of Douglas, "I know the judge is a great man and I am only a small man, but I feel that I have got him." As he was sitting at a table eating dinner on the fair grounds at Urbana, an old woman he knew came up and they spoke greetings. But Lincoln was surprised. "Why, Granny, have you no place to eat your dinner?" She insisted, "I just came to see you, Mr. Lincoln." "This won't do, Granny. You must have a place here. Come and take my place." And he sat down by a tree and ate a turkey leg with bread and butter. People told incidents like that, as though they had actually happened. He made plain people feel at home, so they said.

When he was in Washington as a congressman and his wife wrote letters addressing the envelopes "Hon.," the abbreviation for Honorable, before his name, he wrote to her: "Suppose you do not prefix the 'Hon.' to the address on your letters to me any more—I like the letters very much but I would rather they should not have that upon them."

At the home of Mrs. J. L. Beath in Atlanta, near Bloomington, a special cake had been baked for him. When he saw the cake, he threw his arms into the air and laughed out, "You don't expect me to eat all of that." Meeting John T. Barnett in Galesburg, he had to explain to Mayor Sanderson that years back he and Barnett were spear-fishing in the Sangamon River, and he had held a torch high up so as to keep the light out of his own eyes. And Barnett had called out: "Abe, bring down that torch.

You're holding it clear out of Sangamon County." Lincoln pointed at Barnett and said to the mayor, "This is the man."

He could be so proud and simple as to say when he was asked, with Douglas present, "Do you know who Douglas is?" "Why, yes, he's a man with tens of thousands of *blind* followers. It's my business to make some of those blind followers *see*."

He would take time, raising no fuss about it, to see that an old woman in a railway passenger car got settled with comfort in a double seat. And though nearly thirty years had gone by, he still had the same carelessness of his announcement as a candidate for the legislature, when he was twenty-one. "I am humble Abraham Lincoln. . . . If not—elected—it will be all the same." The remark of an Irish orator that Napoleon was "grand, gloomy, and peculiar," had sunk deep in his mind; though he would surely at times be gloomy and peculiar, he could keep off assumptions of grandeur.

When the Logan County ladies at Atlanta showed him a big cake, tented with white frosting with stripes of red and yellow, to be cut at a dinner for him, he said, "Perhaps I'm not as hungry as I look," and had them auction the cake for a benefit of the Republican campaign fund.

"Give my love to all the connections," he would write to his stepbrother, and more than once the line, "Give my love to all, and especially to Mother." An old Quaker strain had lasted in him; he inherited some natural habit of living plainly. Often he was a slow man, sluggish as a buffalo that couldn't run till he got started running, and after he got started he was hard to slow down. Yet the personal warmth of him, his glow and shine in companionship, was swift and changeful. He often shook hands using both hands and once told a boy, "If you are my boy, you must learn to shake hands with me as my boys always do, double-handed." He had his own way of stooping to say, "How are you, Bub?" It was this often childlike man of whom John Locke Scripps of the *Chicago Tribune* said in 1860, "He has an exquisite sense of justice."

He had grown up among Kentucky and Indiana riflemen who

killed the timber squirrel with a shot in the eye, but he had never pulled trigger on any animal but one wild turkey. He went coon-hunting with other boys and let them do the shooting. Then as a grown man he had spent a share of his life in saloons, among drinking men who knew him as no drinking man at all.

Respectable friends, who cared about reputations as gentlemen and scholars, took it as a little queer, a little like "a country Jake," beneath dignity, that Lincoln should carry with him the book "Joe Miller's Jests," generally called Joe Miller's joke book. English puns, Irish bulls, Greek repartee, folk tales of Jews and Egyptians, brisk anecdotes, filled the book—more than a thousand, each with a serial number. No. 997 told of "the celebrated organist Abbe Vogler, once imitating a thunderstorm so well that for miles round all the milk turned sour." The Irishman was told of, who had been living in Scotland and was asked how he liked the country, replying, "I was sick all the time I was there, and if I had lived there till this time, I'd been dead a year ago." Lord Russell on the scaffold ready to have his head cut off, handed his watch to a bishop, with the remark, "Take this—it shows time; I am going into eternity and no longer need it." Another lord, owing many debts, was asked how he could sleep at night, and answered: "I sleep very well, but I wonder how my creditors can." A wounded officer on a bloody battlefield was howling with pain when another wounded officer near by called to him: "What do you make such a noise for? Do you think nobody is killed but yourself?"

Such was some of the foolery in the book that Lincoln occasionally took out of his carpetbag and read aloud to other lawyers. Some had the pith and poignancy of the gravedigger in the play of Hamlet, one joke reading: "An Irishman going to be hanged, begged that the rope might be tied under his arms instead of round his neck; for, said Pat, I am so remarkably ticklish in the throat, that if tied there, I will certainly kill myself with laughing." Or again Joke No. 506, reading: "Lieutenant Connolly, an Irishman in the service of the United States, during the American war, chanced to take three Hessian prisoners himself,

without any assistance; being asked by the commander-in-chief how he had taken them—'I surrounded them,' was the answer."

There were tales of the people. A traveler in Egypt said to a worker on the land: "I suppose you are quite happy now; the country looks like a garden and every village has its minaret." "God is great," replied the worker. "Our master gives with one hand and takes with two." Another traveler, reporting that he and his servant had made fifty wild Arabs run, said there was nothing surprising about it. "We ran and they ran after us." And again and again little tales of the people, the people. Into the street before Dean Swift's deanery came "a great rabble," waiting "to see the eclipse." And Dean Swift had the big bell rung, and a crier bawling: "O Yes, O Yes, all manner of persons here concerned take notice the eclipse be put off till tomorrow this time! so God save the King and his Reverence the dean." And the rabble went away, all but one Irishman who said he would stay because "the dean might change his mind and have the eclipse that day after all."

Thus Joe Miller's jests. They were a nourishing company to Lincoln. Once in a while he told a story that seemed to have been made over from Joe Miller and placed in Indiana. In his lighter moods his humor matched with the Rabelais definition, "a certain jollity of mind, pickled in the scorn of fortune."

He told of the long-legged boy "sparking" a farmer's daughter when the hostile father came in with a shotgun; the boy jumped through a window, and running across the cabbage patch scared up a rabbit; in about two leaps the boy caught up with the rabbit, kicked it high in the air, and grunted, "Git out of the road and let somebody run that knows how." He told of a Kentucky horse sale where a small boy was riding a fine horse to show off points, when a man whispered to the boy, "Look here, boy, hain't that horse got the splints?" and the boy answered: "Mister, I don't know what the splints is, but if it's good for him, he has got it; if it ain't good for him, he ain't got it."

Riding to Lewiston an old acquaintance, a weather-beaten farmer, spoke of going to law with his next neighbor. "Been a

neighbor of yours for long?" "Nigh onto fifteen year." "Part of the time you get along all right, don't you?" "I reckon we do." "Well, see this horse of mine? I sometimes get out of patience with him. But I know his faults; he does fairly well as horses go; it might take me a long time to get used to some other horse's faults; for all horses have faults."

The instant dignity became bogus his eye caught it. He enjoyed such anecdotes as the one of a Brown County, Indiana, man who killed a neighbor's dog, and the proof of guilt was clear. The defendant's attorney cleared his throat and began a speech, "May it please the court, we are proud to live in a land where justice is administered to the king on the throne and the beggar on his dunghill." The squire then interrupted, "You may go ahead with your speech, but the case *are* decided."

Little folk tales and snatches of odd wisdom known to common people of the ancient kingdoms of the Persians and the Arabians, came to be known among the common people of the farming districts in Illinois, hitched up somehow to Abe Lincoln. When a story or saying had a certain color or smack, it would often be tagged as coming from Lincoln. He had said to a book agent, "For those who like that kind of a book, that's the kind of a book they'll like." He was the man walking along a dusty road when a stranger driving a buggy came along. And he asked the stranger, "Will you be so good as to take my overcoat to town for me?" And the man in the buggy said he would. "But how will you get your overcoat back again?" "Oh, that's easy! I'm going to stay right inside of it." And of course, said some jokers, it was Abe Lincoln who first told a hotel waiter, "Say, if this is coffee, then please bring me some tea, but if this is tea, please bring me some coffee." And on Abe Lincoln was laid the remark, after tasting ice cream, "Say, waiter, I don't want to slander this hotel, but this here pudding's froze."

He had come out of a slushy snow into a courtroom to try a case and sat down to dry his feet at the stove. The words of the lawyer arguing against him came to his ears. All of a sudden he was out in the middle of the courtroom, one shoe off,

calling: "Now, judge, that isn't fair. I'm not going to have this jury all fuddled up."

Did he not say when he met a man somewhat matching his own height, "Well, you're up some"—had they not seen how the clay of the earth clung to him? Before posing for a photographer, he stepped into a barber shop, saying, "I better get my hair slicked up." Then, sitting before the camera, he ran his fingers through his hair, caught himself, and said, "Guess I've made a bird's nest of it again." It was he who agreed to make a horse trade, sight unseen, with a judge. First came the judge the next morning with a broken-down bone-rack of a horse; then came Lincoln carrying a wooden sawhorse on his shoulders, saying, "Well, judge, this is the first time I ever got the worst of it in a horse trade."

A walking, stalking library of stories he was. Some of them could have had musical accompaniments from barn-dance fiddles. The prize story-tellers of one neighborhood and another had met him and they had competed. "That reminds me." "That's like the feller down at Goose Holler." And occasionally was one with a shine of many cross-lights in it. Lincoln told of a balloonist going up in New Orleans, sailing for hours, and dropping his parachute over a cotton field. The gang of negroes picking cotton saw a man coming down from the sky in blue silk, in silver spangles, wearing golden slippers. They ran—all but one old-timer who had the rheumatism and couldn't get away. He waited till the balloonist hit the ground and walked toward him. Then he mumbled: "Howdy, Massa Jesus. How's yo' Pa?"

Lincoln had stood with two umbrellas at an imaginary rat hole, impersonating Sam'l, the Quaker boy whose father wanted to stop the boy's using swear words. The two umbrellas were blacksmith tongs. Sam'l's father had said, "Now, Sam'l, thee will sit here until thee has a rat. If I hear thee swear, thee will sit here till thee has another." And Sam'l had sat there for hours, snipping the tongs a few times, but no rat caught. At last one came out from the rat hole, the whiskers peeping up, then the black nose, and the eyes blinking. And the two um-

brella tongs snapped together in a flash. And Sam'l yelled, "By God, I have thee at last!" And Lincoln with a shaking, swaying frame let out a squeal and stood holding an imaginary wriggling rat between the two umbrellas. He had told this in Illinois towns during the debates with Douglas. And Robert R. Hitt, the phonographic reporter, said he forgot himself and politics and business and nearly believed there was a live squeaking rat caught between the two umbrellas. For a roomful of men in a hotel, Lincoln would perform this drama of Sam'l, Sam'l's father, and the rat, acting subtly the rôles of the earnest father, the obstreperous boy, and the furtive rat.

He picked up comedy, as he met it, and passed it on to others. In Cumberland County, one Dr. Hamburgher, a Democrat, forced his way to the front to reply to Lincoln's speech. As Hamburgher worked into a frothy and threatening speech, a little man with a limp came over to Lincoln and said: "Don't mind *him.* I know *him;* I live here; I'll take care of *him.* Watch me." And he took the platform, and replying brought from Hamburgher the cry, "That's a lie." To which the little man with the limp called out with high defiance, "Never mind, I'll take that from *you*—yes, I'll take anything from you, except your pills." At the mention of pills, the doctor snorted, "You scoundrel, you know I've quit practicing medicine." And the little man dropped down on the knee of his best leg, raised his hands toward the sky in thankfulness, and shouted, "Then, thank God! The country is safe."

Plato, the Kane County lawyer, had told him a story about a man who had beaten a dog to death and was in such a rage that he would go out of the house and again beat the dog to death. When Plato came one day to Lincoln's office in Springfield, Lincoln's greeting was, "Well, Plato, have you got that dog killed yet?"

A family in Indiana, according to Lincoln, picked dandelion tops or other leaves and boiled "greens" for dinner in the spring and early summer. Once after a mess of greens the whole family went out of commission. After that when they had greens a

big helping would first be forked out for Zerah, a half-wit boy, as the family said: "Try it on Zerah. If he stands it, it won't hurt the rest of us." And a man had a horse that would balk and settle down on all four legs like a bird dog. He traded off the horse as good for hunting birds. As the horse crossed a creek he settled down in the middle of it like a bird dog and the man who had owned him called to the new rider: "Ride him! Ride him! He's as good for fish as he is for birds."

People looked at Lincoln, searching his face, thinking about his words and ways, ready to believe he was a Great Man. Then he would spill over with a joke or tell of some new horseplay of wit or humor in the next county. The barriers tumbled. He was again a strange friend, a neighbor, a friendly stranger, no far-off Great Man at all. "His face," Moncure D. Conway noted, "had a battered and bronzed look, without being hard." He fitted the measurements, "three parts sublime to one grotesque."

A crowd was bubbling with mirth in an Ohio town as a short friend stood alongside Lincoln to introduce him. Lincoln, pointing at himself, said, "This is the long of it," and putting an arm on the friend's shoulder, "And this is the short of it."

Joe Fifer, an eighteen-year-old cornhusker, heard Lincoln at Bloomington after Swett made the opening address. "When Lincoln was starting to speak," Fifer noticed, "some men near me said Lincoln was no great shakes as a public speaker and Swett would make a better showing against Douglas. But when Lincoln got to going they listened; they stood still without moving out of their foot tracks. Lincoln looked out on a wall of faces still as if they had been made of stone."

The Springfield doctor, William Jayne, trying to fathom why Lincoln had carried the crowds with him usually in debating with Douglas, said: "Everybody thinks he is honest and believes what he says. If he was really a great man, or if people regarded him as a great man, he could not do half so much."

He was the man who had started a little circle of people to giggling one morning in Judge Davis's courtroom, and the judge

sputtered out: "I am not going to stand this any longer, Mr. Lincoln. You're always disturbing this court with your tom-foolery." The fine was $5.00, for disorderly conduct. Lincoln sat with his hand over his mouth, trying to keep his face straight. Later the judge called Lawrence Weldon to him and Weldon whispered into his ear what it was that Lincoln had told. Then the judge giggled. Getting his face straight, he announced, "The clerk may remit Mr. Lincoln's fine." The joke had to do with "taking up a subscription to buy Jim Wheeler a new pair of pants."

He could speak of So-and-So as "a quiet, orderly, faithful man." And he could hand a bottle to a baldheaded man he wished to get rid of, with the remarks: "Try this stuff for your hair. Keep it up. They say it will grow hair on a pumpkin. Come back in ten months and tell me how it works." When it was intimated to him that he was consulting too much with Judge Davis, he told of a New Hampshire judge who said: "The only time the chief judge ever consulted was at the close of a long day's session, when he turned and whispered, 'Don't your back ache?'" He liked to tell of the strict judge of whom it was said: "He would hang a man for blowing his nose in the street, but he would quash the indictment if it failed to specify which hand he blew it with."

When he presented Coles County relatives with a sad-faced photograph of himself, he said, "This is not a very good-looking picture, but it's the best that could be produced from the poor subject."

He had written angry letters filled with hard names and hot arguments. And such letters he had thrown in the stove. He gave the advice that it was healthy to write a hot letter and then burn it.

In the manuscript of a speech on the Constitution, he began, "All is not the result of accident." In a letter to a client, he closed, "Be patient—they have not got your land yet." When, twenty years previous, the Democrats had jockeyed with the supreme court and enlarged it from five to nine judgeships, and

Stephen A. Douglas had taken one of the judgeships for himself, Lincoln told him, "I would not behave as well as you will have to now, for twice the money." He had a certain elusive code of behavior, varying with events. When he chose to, he could imitate a stutterer he knew who had a trick of whistling between stuttered syllables. In his earlier years as an orator, he had tried for ornamental phrases. Later he referred to such decorations as "fizzlegigs and fireworks."

The Alton Railroad conductor, Gilbert Finch, said people could get near Lincoln in a sort of neighborly way, as though they had always known him. "But there was something tremendous between you and him all the time," said Finch. "I have eaten with Lincoln many times at the railroad eating-houses, and you get very neighborly if you eat together in railroad restaurants. Everybody tried to get as near Lincoln as possible when he was eating, because he was such good company. But we couldn't exactly make him out. Sometimes I would see what looked like dreadful loneliness in his look, and I used to wonder what he was thinking about. Whatever it was he was thinking alone. It wasn't a solemn look, like Stephen A. Douglas sometimes had. Douglas sometimes made me think of an owl; he stared at you with dark eyes in a way that almost frightened you.

"Lincoln never frightened anybody," said the Alton conductor. "No one was afraid of him. But something about him made plain folks feel toward him a good deal as a child feels toward his father."

There came to be registered on Lincoln's face some of the poetry of his having said of "Popular Sovereignty" that it was "nothing but a living, creeping lie" and of one Douglas argument that it got down as thin as "soup made by boiling the shadow of a pigeon that had starved to death." Picking up a trick compliment from Douglas, he smiled it into thin air with the comment, "Not being accustomed to flattery, it came the sweeter to me."

A Boston scholar saw Lincoln as having "a plain, ploughed face; a mind, absent in part; features that expressed neither

self-satisfaction nor any other Americanism but rather the same painful sense of being educated or of needing education that tormented a private secretary; above all a lack of apparent force." Many in Illinois knew him as a "learner." Lincoln told Bagby at Pekin that he was thrown in a wrestling match once, and, "I asked the fellow to show me how he did it. He showed me. And I said, 'Now, please try it again.' And I threw him as easily as he did me."

He was not merely tall, but longish. Edwin M. Stanton, referring to the reaper patent case and Lincoln as his associate counsel in Cincinnati, told Don Piatt, "I said that if that giraffe appeared in the case I would throw up my brief and leave." When Indiana people asked Dan Voorhees what Lincoln looked like he told them: "Lincoln is lean and lathy; his long, dangling, rake-handle arms are strong as steel; he stoops a little, is angular, a man of bony corners. His awkwardness is all in his looks; in his movements he is quick, sure, and graceful. Even when he crosses his spiderlike legs or throws them over the arms of his chair, he does it with a natural grace."

Germans and Irishmen had greetings from him. "I know enough German to know that Kaufman means merchant, and Schneider means tailor—am I not a good German scholar?" Or, "That reminds me of what the Irishman said, 'In this country one man is as good as another; and for the matter of that, very often a great deal better."

Meeting Henry C. Whitney once, he told of a chat with the famous Baltimore lawyer, Reverdy Johnson, in Cincinnati. Johnson took a laugh for himself, believed it funny, that the will of Daniel Webster had made trouble for Webster's friends. The will mentioned certain silver-plate articles to be manufactured and presented to certain friends. And when the estate was settled, it was found the silver plate had been ordered but there wasn't money to pay for it. And so, Daniel Webster's friends paid their own cash to the jewelers for their remembrances from the celebrated dead man. Reverdy Johnson chuckled over the affair. And Lincoln told Whitney he couldn't see anything funny

about the affair, adding that if Johnson were to make such a will, his own friends might be in the same fix as Webster's.

His father and mother had been of the predestinarian Baptist faith, and he had a predestinarian streak, a leaning to the belief, "What is to be is to be." Among the Lincolns in Hancock County, children of Mordecai Lincoln, and among other Lincolns in Kentucky, it was said they were uneven workers, odd fellows, ringing high with laughter and then dropping to depths of gloom, "cantankerous but likable." In their blood seemed to run a melancholia they spoke of as "the Lincoln horrors," "the Lincoln hypo." They were large-boned, long-armed, long-legged men.

In Springfield and other places, something out of the ordinary seemed to connect with Abraham Lincoln's past, his birth, a mystery of where he came from. The wedding certificate of his father and mother was not known to be on record. Whispers floated of his origin as "low-flung," of circumstances so misty and strange that political friends wished they could be cleared up and made respectable. Hardin County in Kentucky, where the wedding license of Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks was recorded, had been divided into two counties—and the wanted document had gone to the newly made Larue County courthouse —where no one had thought to search.

He had lived long enough to have a portrait gallery in his memory to muse over. He had seen John McNamar, once the betrothed of Ann Rutledge, turning the mother and sisters of Ann out of house and home, marrying Deborah Latimer in 1838, building a brick house that dominated the landscape, burying a first wife and marrying Eliza McNeal in 1855, a cold man of mortgages, per cents, accumulations, whose most excellent trait was always told in the words, "He's a quick man to figure." He had seen Ned Baker, the song-voiced, the reckless, the warm-hearted, move across the Great Plains and the Rockies to California and then to Oregon; the news was that Ned Baker would be the next United States Senator from Oregon.

Tom Nelson and Dick Thompson, two young lawyers and politicians over at Terre Haute, Indiana, were telling how they

rode a whole day with Lincoln on the seventy-two-mile stage ride to Indianapolis. They didn't know who Lincoln was; he didn't tell them; and they were having a good time bantering him about his long legs, hayseed in his collar. In a hotel lobby that evening they saw him button-holed by important people and were told, "That's Abe Lincoln of Illinois; he's here to see the governor on business." When they apologized to Lincoln, he drawled, "That's all right; I guess I enjoyed it about as much as you did."

About three times in ten years Whitney remembered having seen Lincoln lose his temper. Once was the morning of the day when Douglas was to arrive in triumph from Washington and open the 1858 senatorial campaign. Lincoln had come to Chicago to argue a motion for a new trial before Judge Drummond. But T. Lyle Dickey, the opposing lawyer, suddenly sent word, "You go ahead and make your argument now, and I'll make mine later." The same Dickey had a short time before, in a letter the newspapers printed, drawn away from support of Lincoln for senator. As Lincoln read Dickey's message, he started walking back and forth in Whitney's office, crying in a high key, "I hain't got any argument to make! I hain't got any argument to make!" And when Whitney tried to murmur questions about the reasons for the excitement, Lincoln thrust the Dickey message into Whitney's hands and went on again, "I hain't got any argument to make!"

Usually he was easy to accommodate. "You're too late for supper but maybe we can scrape up something," a Bloomington hotel clerk told him. "All right, I don't want much," was the reply.

Taking a ten-minute walk with Owen K. Reeves before court opened one morning in Bloomington, Lincoln passed the new Gridley mansion with its large pretensions of grandeur. He remarked that for a man to live in a house like that had an effect on his character. "If he's at all sensitive he'll feel it."

When Tad was late bringing home the milk he hunted the boy and came home with Tad on his shoulders and carrying the milk

pail himself. Once he chased Tad and brought the boy home, holding the little one at arm's length; the father chuckled at the son's struggle to kick him in the face. Once as he lugged the howling Willie and Tad, a neighbor asked, "Why, Mr. Lincoln, what's the matter?" The answer: "Just what's the matter with the whole world. I've got three walnuts and each wants two."

Once during a concert at the First Presbyterian Church, election returns were being discussed by the audience between the classical numbers of the program. There was a buzzing, even while music was being performed, as to which counties had been carried. And Lincoln, it was said, had turned his head and replied to some remark from the rear, in a tone heard by the entire audience, "Wait till we hear from Macoupin." At another time, while an elocutionist was reciting the satirical poem "Nothing to Wear," a clear unmistakable snort of laughter broke over the audience at a point where no one else saw anything to laugh at. All turned and looked at Lincoln, who wished that minute he could slink out of sight.

His mind had wandered in speculative humor, led by some phase of the poem, "Nothing to Wear," and his apparatus for laughter had suddenly obeyed an impulse. The act was evidence that he was a man who laughed alone sometimes, his laughing muscles coördinating in chimes with his mental reckonings in elements of the comic.

There were serious people who believed Lincoln to be a good man, a keen and a kindly man, with a smart head on him and a big heart. Yes, he was all this. But he was not a Great Man. He was hardly great enough to be a United States senator, let alone a President of the United States. They had heard of his telling stories. Or they had listened to him telling these stories. And they had laughed at the stories. They couldn't help laughing. "He makes you laugh in spite of yourself."

And these serious people didn't want a Laughing President. There never had been a Laughing President. At the head of

the Government should be a solemn man who was constantly grave and dignified in his deportment. Abe Lincoln was a good fellow. But he wouldn't do for President. He was so honest that if he went to the White House he would just naturally tell visitors the same livery-stable yarns he was telling in Illinois. For President there should be a man as earnest as the Constitution and the amendments thereto. If he should be so comical that he could make a cat laugh, he wouldn't do.

And there were still other people, not so many, who wondered what it would be like to have a plain, awkward shambler like Lincoln in the White House at Washington. There never had been a Laughing President. Why not try one once? Why not see what an easy-going fellow like Lincoln would do in the presidential chair?

Everybody knew him and nobody knew him. He seemed to have more secrets about himself, that he kept to himself, than any one else in Illinois. "The most secretive, shut-mouthed man I ever knew," said his law partner. "The most reticent man I ever saw, or expect to see," said Judge David Davis, in whose court Lincoln practiced twelve years. "I doubt whether he ever asked anybody's advice about anything," said Leonard Swett.

"In eating, sleeping, reading, conversation, study, he was regularly irregular, with no stated time for eating, no fixed time for going to bed, none for getting up," said Joshua Speed. "When ignorant on any subject, no matter how simple, he was always willing to acknowledge it." A friend quoted from Calhoun, "To legislate upon precedent is but to make the error of yesterday the law of today," and said Lincoln remarked it was "a great truth grandly uttered."

"You might have made money entering land at a dollar and a quarter an acre," Gillespie told him. "Yes, that is true—but I never had any money sense."

The shifty ins and outs of politics in which he moved, and his walk when walking as if on eggshells, were intimated in his once writing to Swett: "I see no objection to the letter you have

written to Shaffer. Send it to him, but do not let him know I have seen it; and by a postscript tell him to come down and see me."

He could be diplomatic, and write a note of introduction that on first reading seemed to be complimentary, but on second reading said, "For all I know, this fellow is a deadbeat and a liar." Swett in Bloomington was handed a note by a man who had carried it from Lincoln in Springfield. It greeted "Hon. L. Swett" as "Dear Sir" and read:

> This introduces Mr. William Yates, who visits Bloomington on some business matter. He is pecuniarily responsible for anything he will say; and, in fact, for anything he will say on any subject.
>
> Yours very truly,
>
> A. LINCOLN.

Besides the Laughing Lincoln there was the Sad Man. "He looks as if he had lost all his friends," was a common remark. Before he loosened up and hit his stride in a public speech, his eyes were the dull gray of a dead fish, as one observer saw him. He recited poetry as from the depths of grief that could not be sung nor spoken; the desperation of it might be hinted in the adumbrations of words, with low whimperings of defeated winter winds or the fugitive monotones of the mourning dove that sat summer on summer in the hopeful maples. The music of this verse pleased him:

> The mossy marbles rest
> On the lips that he has pressed
> In their bloom;
> And the names he loved to hear
> Have been carved for many a year
> On the tomb.

He had told Herndon he would come to some terrible end; he didn't know what; it was a fate that lurked ahead. The melancholy of Lincoln bothered Herndon, who could be desperate and wailing and vocal, but who could not understand the satu-

rated and impregnated woe that steeped Lincoln and made Lincoln a Man Alone. Stories rose, idly as breezes. Lincoln had gone to a voodoo woman in New Orleans; she gazed with shiny eyes into his face and told him, "You will be a President of the United States." At the selling of a beautiful octoroon, he had clenched his fists and sworn, "By God, boys, if I ever get a chance to hit that thing I'll hit it and hit it hard." Of the shambling form of his law partner in one of the dark moods, Herndon said, "Melancholy dripped from him."

His very eyes and hair were baffling. Herndon said his hair was dark brown, almost black. Others saw it as black shaded to a sandy tinge. Lincoln himself described it as "coarse black." His eyes were chiefly gray; but one shrewd observer saw a tint of hazel; the color of his eyes shaded to a hint of brown just as his hair did; one who hated him said he had "a small, lascivious mouth" and "tender, bluish eyes."

Tradition had attached to him, as to storm-split oak branches grown together and leafed out. He had only wept tears instead of pronouncing a funeral oration over Bowling Green; he had shaken O. B. G. Ficklin by the nape of his neck, down in pro-slavery Egypt, forcing the admission that his Mexican War record was clean as to support of soldiers in the field; he had plucked from nowhere a simple almanac that saved Duff Armstrong from the gallows. He was a piece of the prairie drama of Illinois.

He defended Peachy Harrison who killed Greek Grafton, a law student in the office of Lincoln & Herndon. On the witness stand came old Peter Cartwright, the famous circuit rider, grandfather of the accused murderer. "How long have you known the prisoner?" "I have known him since a babe; he laughed and cried on my knee." And Lincoln led on with more questions, till old Peter Cartwright was telling the last words that slowly choked out from the murdered man, three days after the stabbing: "I am dying; I will soon part with all I love on earth and I want you to say to my slayer that I forgive him. I want to leave this earth with a forgiveness of all who have in any way injured me." Lincoln had then begged the jury to be as

forgiving as the murdered man. The handling of the grandfather, as a witness, cleared Peachy Harrison, and set him free.

The name of the man had come to stand for what he was, plus beliefs, conjectures, and guesses. He was spoken of as a "politician" in the sense that politics is a trade of cunning, ambitious, devious men. He himself once had told the Illinois legislature that politicians are a lower breed, more often tricky than honest. He chose a few issues on which to explain his mind fully. If he had chosen more issues his time would have been spent as a talker only; he probably thought there are enough talkers. Some of his reticences were not evasions but retirements to cloisters of silence. Questions of life and destiny shook him close to prayers and tears in his own hidden corners and byways; the depths of the issues were too dark, too pitiless, inexorable, for a man to open his mouth and try to tell what he knew.

In the cave of winds in which he saw history in the making he was far more a listener than a talker. The high sportsmanship of great poets, inventors, explorers, facing adventure into the unknown and the unknowable, was in his face and breath, and had come to be known, to a few, for the danger and bronze of it.

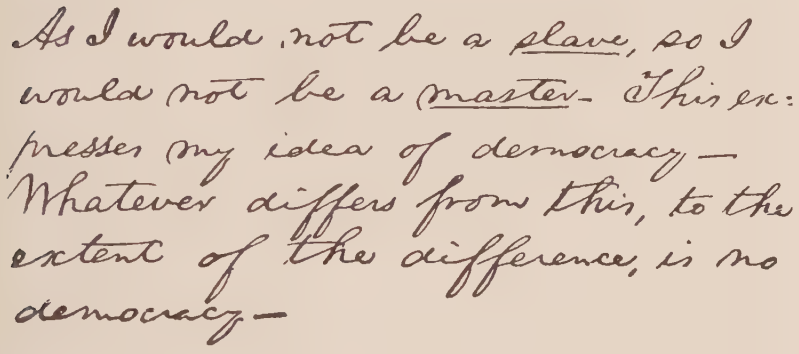
There was a word: democracy. Tongues of politics played with it. Lincoln had his slant at it. "As I would not be a *slave*, so I would not be a *master*. This expresses my idea of democracy. Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference, is no democracy."

Though the years had passed, he still believed, "Improvement in condition is the order of things in a society of equals." And he still struggled under the load of that conundrum of history he had written ten years back: "As labor is the common burden of our race, so the effort of some to shift their share of the burden onto the shoulders of others is the great durable curse of the race."

There were things in politics and in everyday behavior he was stubborn about. It was whispered he could twist a friend out

and twist himself in on a certain political deal. He wrote, "I would as soon put my head in the fire as attempt it."

He had faced men who had yelled, "I'll fight any man that's goin' to vote for that miserable skunk, Abe Lincoln." And he knew homes where solemn men declared, "I've seen Abe Lincoln when he played mournin' tunes on their heartstrings till they mourned with the mourners." He was taken, in some log cabins,


As I would not be a slave, so I
would not be a master- This ex:
presses my idea of democracy—
Whatever differs from this, to the
extent of the difference, is no
democracy—
A. Lincoln-

as a helper of men. "When I went over to hear him at Alton," said one, "things looked onsartin. 'Peared like I had more'n I could stand up under. But he hadn't spoken more'n ten minutes afore I felt like I never had no load. I begin to feel ashamed o' bein' weary en complainin'."

He loved trees, was kin somehow to trees. Pine, cedar, spruce, cypress, had each their pine family ways for him. He could pick cross-breeds of trees that plainly belonged to no special family. He had found trees and men alike; on the face of them, the outside, they didn't tell their character. Life, wind, rain, lightning, events, told the fibre, what was clean or rotten.

Hearing a young woman sing, he stopped on the street sidewalk in Springfield and listened to the song that came through an open window. He sent word he would like a copy of the song; it came written on gilt-edged paper in a perfumed envelope, marked, "Mr. Lincoln—Present." He read the lines often, wrote on the envelope, "Poem—I like this." The first of four stanzas read:

> Tell me, ye winged winds
> That round my pathway roar,
> Do ye not know some spot
> Where mortals weep no more?
> Some lone and pleasant vale,
> Some valley in the west,
> Where, free from toil and pain,
> The weary soul may rest?
> The loud wind dwindled to a whisper low,
> And sighed for pity as it answered, No.

In going to New Salem nearly thirty years back he had been, in his own words, "a piece of driftwood floating down the Sangamon." He was, in moods, a drifter, letting the wind and weather of history have their way with him, and taking no credit to himself for the inevitable. He told Herndon he had seen great men up close who were not so great as they seemed far off.

Answering the charge that "Old Zach" Taylor was egotistical, he had said that Taylor had to have a high opinion of himself to accomplish what he did. In the same stump speech Lincoln mentioned the Democrats calling Taylor a humpback. "They say he is humpbacked, but whether his back is crooked or straight, his friends will overlook it, and his enemies will say it is so anyhow."

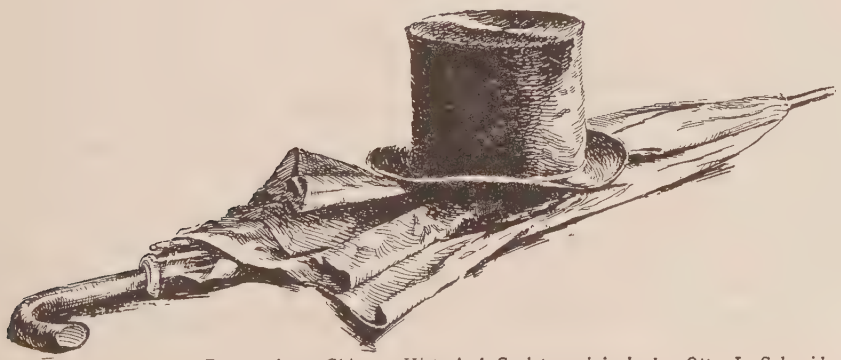
The left corner of Lincoln's mouth had the lines of a laughing man. Beyond a struggle in which he was loser he could see another struggle, and write in a letter, "There will be another blow-up and we shall have fun again." But the right corner of his mouth had a droop; he could say, "I laugh because if I didn't I would weep."

Sometimes a poetry of fine wisdom in short words came from his tongue as carelessly as raindrops on high corn. Milt Hay, whose law office was on the same floor as Lincoln's, told Joe Fifer and others about a goat Lincoln met on the street one morning going to the office.

"Boys had been deviling the goat to make for people and butt them off their feet," said Hay, "and this morning Lincoln with his hands folded behind him, and his chin sunk in his bosom, comes along the street. And the goat makes for him. Well, Lincoln could be pretty quick when he wanted to be. And he stooped over and his two hands got hold of the two horns of the goat."

Then Lincoln dropped down, put his face close to the goat's face and slowly drawled: "Now—there—isn't—any—good—reason—why—you—should—want—to—harm—me;—and — there isn't—any—good—reason—why—I—should—want—to — harm you. The—world—is—big—enough—for—both—of—us—to live—in. If—you—behave—yourself—as—you—ought—to,—and—if—I—behave—myself—like—I—ought—to,—we'll — get along—without—a—cross—word—or—action—and—we'll—live in—peace—and—harmony—like—good—neighbors."

Then Lincoln lifted at the two horns, dropped the goat over a high fence, and walked up the street.



Drawn from Chicago Historical Society originals by Otto J. Schneider.

Chapter 138

In his younger days Lincoln had said on the stump that usury is wrong; the Bible was right; to loan money at interest is unjust. But in 1859 he loaned $3,000.00 to Norman B. Judd at ten per cent, took Judd's note for the amount, and came into possession of a quitclaim deed, dated November 10, 1859, from Norman B. Judd and wife to Abraham Lincoln, of seventeen lots in Riddle's subdivision, and ten acres of land along the right of way of the M. & M. Railway in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Besides this property he had a lot in the town of Lincoln, Illinois, in connection with his fee for incorporating the town; a farm of 120 acres in Crawford County, Iowa, and forty acres in Tama County, this being land received from the Government for his Black Hawk War service. This, with ownership of his two-story cottage and lot in Springfield, and collectible bills he had out, made him worth between $15,000 and $25,000.

In earlier years he had been reckless about promises to pay; he exaggerated his future available cash. Since then he had grown careful in estimates as to cash he might raise, present or future. "I could not raise ten thousand dollars if it would save me from the fate of John Brown," he wrote on March 17, 1860, replying to a query as to whether he was willing to stake that amount on his chances for political success that year.

He had come into possession of enough property to give him understanding of the feeling of property responsibility, or the fear of property dispossession, or the slippery and fugitive character of property, and the social and political attributes and organizations that collect and cluster for mutual protection around property. That a small gold coin placed over a verse in the Bible hides that verse, was an illustration he used often. Had he chosen to develop the property instinct, and sharpen his property scent, as he had chosen to develop his political instinct, he would have rivaled Judge Davis, the millionaire landowner, who

was the leading manager of the campaign to nominate Lincoln for President.

The frugal and careful ways of Lincoln in handling property, his scruples and fears about the slightest sort of cheating, his code of clean and exact justice as seen by Davis, Fell, and Judd, was an element in their support of him, and was an argument they could employ with others. They could say that Lincoln would be honest and just in the handling of property and of property owners, if he should be made President of the United States. It was true that in Connecticut Lincoln had told the striking shoe-factory workers, "Thank God we have a country where workingmen have the right to strike," but this, when discussed, was taken as political good-fellowship, or at least as not connected with the main issues of the campaign. Also the dangers that organized labor could threaten property with were not seriously thought of; labor unions were few, scattered, and weak. Their development was yet to come. Of him as man, lawyer, or politician, as custodian and caretaker of property, the managers of Lincoln as a presidential dark horse had, in their twenty years' close acquaintance with him, seen and heard nothing to indicate that he stood for anything else than stanch security for private and public property.

Lincoln had often spoken of property rights in a scornful way, as compared with human rights, but he had in mind, they believed, *slave* property, which was all in the southern states. And even of this property he did not speak in the violent way of the Abolitionists who were willing to confiscate it. Lincoln was in favor of complete protection for all slave property, where it then existed; his scornful opposition was to the spread and establishment of this form of property beyond its then existing boundaries. In the matter of railroads, banks, gas and light companies, land corporations, they were familiar with his record as one of strict scruples; no crooked or shady deal could be named. He had helped to bond the state for million-dollar canal and railroad enterprises that went to smash and left the state sunk deep in

debt; but he had not joined in any such action as that of the states of Mississippi and Pennsylvania in repudiating such debts; he had forgotten about it or didn't want it mentioned except in a humorous way.

In a formal legal paper concerning his own finances he had no hesitation about such admissions as, "He owed me some trifle," or, "The exact amount I never knew." Yet a convincing accuracy would stand out from his statement of a tangled account. When Nathaniel Hay died Lincoln presented the administrator of the estate with a note and due-bill for $216.80 pinned to a sheet of paper headed "Explanation." It explained:

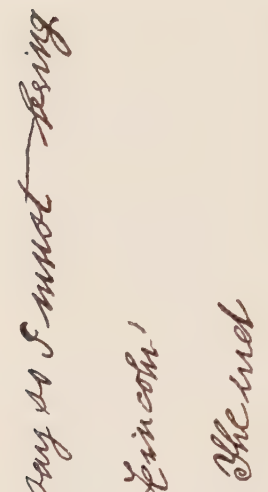
> In April 1849 I loaned Nathaniel Hay two hundred dollars for which I took his note at six per cent for first six months and ten per cent afterwards. At the time he owed me some trifle for fees. Afterwards from time to time I had bricks of him, and once he paid me ten dollars in money. In January or February 1855 we made a turn by which he paid the First Presbyterian Church twelve or fourteen dollars for me. On the 2d of March 1855, we had a settlement including all these things; and as the old note was already nearly covered with former settlements and credits, he took it up, and gave me the note and due-bill herewith filed, the note being for the original principal loaned, and the due-bill for a balance of interest due. After this, in June 1855, he furnished me bricks for the foundation of a fence, amounting to fifteen or sixteen dollars, which I have always considered as having substantially paid the due-bill. In August 1855 he furnished me bricks for the pit of a privy, for which he or his estate is entitled to a credit on the note. The exact amount of this last lot of bricks I never knew, but I suppose the administrator can find it on Mr. Hay's books.

When he wrote Keokuk Republicans in 1859 that he couldn't speak there, he wished to convey the impression that he was not to be classed with rich lawyers. "It is bad to be poor," he wrote. "I shall go to the wall for bread and meat, if I neglect my business this year as well as last." At the same time, Mrs. Lincoln had bought a carriage and hired a young neighbor, Josiah P. Kent, to act as coachman of her livery. "In order to keep up with fashion," said Kent, "she hired me to drive her around

town on certain days, usually for a few hours in the afternoon, going from house to house where she made calls." The pay was twenty-five cents for each drive. One day she offered Kent an extra twenty-five cents to go to Myers, the iceman, and find out why Myers wasn't bringing ice. Myers explained he had been accused of short weight and Mrs. Lincoln lost her temper and used hard words that could be heard to the next corner. Kent offered excuses, and argued, and the next day ice came to the Lincoln house.

One day, when a circus was in town, Kent waited on a street corner for Lincoln and asked for fifty cents; Mrs. Lincoln was owing him that much but he didn't like to ask for it. Lincoln said, "Fifty cents is rather small pay for the service you seem to have rendered Mrs. Lincoln, and you should have been paid long ago." He handed Kent seventy-five cents. "What's the extra quarter for?" "That's interest on your investment," laughed Lincoln. Kent was one of a gang of boys who stuck out a lath from behind a picket fence, and as Lincoln passed under his stovepipe hat was knocked off; as he picked up his hat he laughed through the pickets, "Boys, you ought to be ashamed to impose on an old man."

Kent asked Lincoln, one afternoon, if he could borrow the carriage, not telling Lincoln that he wanted to take his gang of boys out to a swimming-hole. Lincoln answered it couldn't be done; there were two things he couldn't lend, his wife and his carriage; but he would loan his horse and harness. And it was a secret the boys kept from Lincoln that Kent took the carriage, the horse had a runaway streak and smashed the carriage so that a blacksmith had to make repairs and they had to paint the broken places and throw dust over the fresh paint. It was about this time that a neighbor, Allen, overtook Lincoln along the street one fine morning, and Lincoln said, "It's a great day for the race." "What race?" "The human race." Meeting C. H. Berg on the street in Springfield, he recognized the boy as a printer's devil who had built a fire for him early one morning as he shivered in a newspaper office in Galena two years before.



Original in Barrett Collection.

Willie Lincoln writes to a chum.

"How do you do, young man, and are you still working at the printing business? . . . Well, the printing office is the poor boy's college, and if you stick there you will at least receive an education."

He could chuckle over Willie Lincoln writing a letter ending, "I have not any more to say so I must bring my letter to an end."

A letter came from the Burnet House in Cincinnati. Lincoln had asked the clerk about his bill there and was told the committee would pay it. And somehow the committee hadn't. In paying it, Lincoln struck off some items, writing: "As to wines, liquors, and cigars, we had none—absolutely none. These last may have been in 'Room 15' by order of committee, but I do not recollect them at all."

Johnny Kane stepped into the office one afternoon, finding Lincoln alone, reading a book. "Well, Johnny, what can the law do for you?" Johnny was collecting a quarter apiece from property owners to pay for a force pump at Withey's Carriage Repository, to put out fires. The pump would be named "The Deluge." Lincoln said they had picked a good name, better than such names as "Gusher" or "Spouter." He quizzed Johnny all about the pump, and the young men who were going to pull it on four wheels. Then with a straight face and sober manner he handed Johnny

the quarter of a dollar. On Herndon just then stepping in, Lincoln reminded him he had a henhouse that was inflammable, and he ought to subscribe. But Herndon wouldn't listen. He started talking about a law case. And Johnny went out.

In a quarrel between three sons and a grandson, on one side, as against three daughters and their husbands, on the other side, over the question to which of these heirs a dying old man intended to leave certain land and other belongings, Lincoln was the lawyer for the three sons and grandson. He wrote out in ink with his own hand fifteen pages of legal-cap paper filled with reasons why his clients should get the property. He briefed his arguments: (1) General remarks on the law of wills. (2) Answer the particular points and objections made by the other side—see notes taken while they were speaking. (3) Read from the authorities and settle on a definition of "sound mind and memory." (4) Show that in this case the Testator had such "sound mind and memory" at the time of making the will. Then followed fourteen reasons why the dead man was of sound mind and memory just before he died; his asking a doctor to write his will; his answer to a woman who had testified he was too weak to make a will; his saying his will was already made, since his getting a blank roll of paper; his getting a package of title papers; his making first provision for his wife; his providing that one son should pay rent to the mother; "his decision as to what was to be done with the home place"; his reply when one woman suggested she should have the house; his recollection of two persons he hated, as declared on his deathbed; "his eagerness about it the night before, and on the day the will was made—his being reminded of it the day after—and still remaining quiet till his death." Toward the close of the brief, he noted of Judge Stephen T. Logan, the opposing counsel and one of the highest-priced lawyers in Illinois: "Judge Logan resumes after dinner—Wants the jury to watch me *very* closely. Says some Judges decide one way, and some another, in Will cases."

He took a train for Chicago, in March of 1860, on the Sand-bar

case. This made four times he had taken a train to Chicago, carrying his papers on the Sand-bar case. The ownership of land at the mouth of the Chicago River, "shore land," was at issue; Lincoln was defending the title of William Jones and Sylvester Marsh as owners. Jones had hard days on the witness stand; the complainant's lawyers tore at him as if he were a swindler, cocked their eyes at him as though in the presence of a rascal; Lincoln would greet Jones as he left the stand, take his hand, and laugh: "Don't be discouraged, Mr. Jones. There are those who are better lawyers than gentlemen." The lawyers on both sides, and the judge, were dinner guests one evening, and finished with a toast, "May Illinois furnish the next President of the United States," to which all Lincoln Republicans and Douglas Democrats present drank heartily. Lincoln stopped at the Tremont House, sat for the sculptor, Leonard W. Volk, to make a life mask, visited Evanston and Waukegan, and went into a little candy store at State and Adams streets and forgot to carry away his handy pocket dictionary. The decision in the Sand-bar case was again in favor of Lincoln's clients; which only started action to send the case up to the United States Supreme Court.

He looked in on Whitney's office in the Metropolitan Block. Whitney had become a Chicago lawyer. No longer would Whitney and Lincoln hitch up on hog and sheep cases in Urbana. They were getting metropolitan; they had graduated from the Eighth Circuit. Whitney had tickets to Rumsey and Newcomb's Minstrels, and queried, "Would you like to go to a nigger show tonight?" "Of all things I would rather do tonight that certainly is one," said the tickled Lincoln. "It's a high-toned troupe," Whitney guaranteed. And they went, Lincoln to rollick and clap his hands. A new song was offered. "I wish I was in de land ob cotton, Old times dar am not forgotten, Look away, look away, Dixie Land." And Lincoln rollicked, "Let's have it again! Let's have it again!"

He went into court and explained to a jury the workings of different kinds of water wheels, to show that the water wheel

of his client in the case of Parker *vs.* Hoyt was not an infringement on a patent. The jury had been out two hours; Lincoln was walking the street in sight of the windows of the room where the jury was locked in; Grant Goodrich, his associate counsel, came and told him one man on the jury had held up a finger toward them. This set Lincoln wondering whether the jury were eleven to one against him. He told Goodrich it might be like the case he had in Tazewell County where the jury was eleven to one against his client, a woman seeking a divorce. Eleven jurymen had signed a verdict favoring the husband. The twelfth man said: "Gentlemen, I am going to lie down and sleep, and when you get ready to give a verdict for that little woman, then wake me; for before I give a verdict against her, I will lie here till I rot and the pismires carry me out through the keyhole." As it happened, the rights of the water wheel Lincoln argued for were upheld by the jury.

And he wrote a letter to Lamon down at Danville, where Lamon was state prosecutor, and had appointed Lincoln as assistant counsel to draw an indictment in a case. A motion to quash the indictment was up. He told Lamon he believed he had drawn a fairly good indictment, and, "If, after all, the indictment shall be quashed, it will only prove that my forte is as a Statesman, rather than as a Prosecutor."

On Sunday mornings occasionally Lincoln would go to his office, take off his coat and stretch out on the sofa. "He would lie on his back and look up at the ceiling an hour or two, not saying a word," said Milt Hay. "What he was thinking about he didn't say. Sometimes after a long spell of silence he might say, 'Hay, did it ever strike you as peculiar?' and then go on with some thought he had been tracing, talking as he lay on his back looking at the ceiling. After a while he might get up and look around in some books or papers or write a letter or two. Then he'd put on his coat and hat and walk home in time for dinner."

Chapter 139

Once when Lincoln's wife came to see him in his office, he was puzzled about the business in hand, and as his face took on an absent look Mrs. Lincoln said, "Mr. Lincoln, you look like you were having your picture taken."

He had a face he could manipulate, with take-off and put-on of look and tone, shadings in a gamut of the comedy of life. He was a practiced actor and an individual artist in the use of his face, when the going was good, and the time and company proper. He had grown up in a society where the theatre and professional dramatic entertainments were scarce, and in the idle evenings and on rainy days people had to create art by themselves. The amateur entertainer was encouraged. It was an experienced comedian's face of which a biographer of Lincoln said in 1860: "His features are not handsome, but extremely mobile; his mouth particularly so. He has the faculty of contorting that feature to provoke uproarious merriment. Good humor gleams in his eye and lurks in the corner of his mouth." Thus he looked—in action.

Lincoln had often sat before a camera while a photographer stood with watch in hand counting the minutes till the "sitter" would be told, "All right, it's over." In front of the sitter was the black box with the negative plate taking a sun-print of his face, while behind him was an iron rack that his head fitted against while he kept his face muscles quiet, or stiff, till enough minutes had been counted off. Later, when proofs were brought to him, Lincoln left it to others to pick out the ones for final prints. Also it was others who urged him to have his pictures taken. He had greeted crowds, remarking that while they were looking into his face and he into theirs, he had "the advantage."

In his book of "Joe Miller's Jests" was an anecdote of two Frenchmen who were going to fight a duel. And one had stared long at the face of his enemy and said, "I can't fight with you," apologized, begged a thousand pardons, and explained, "If we

fight I shall kill you and then I will remain the ugliest fellow in the kingdom." It was a story much like Lincoln's of his meeting with a man who handed him a pistol, saying, "I promised long ago that if I ever met a man uglier than myself I would hand him this pistol and tell him to shoot me." And Lincoln had answered, after searching the fellow's face, "Well, if I am uglier than you are, for God's sake, go ahead and shoot." Thus the story was told.

Perhaps such stories flitted through his mind as he sat one day before a mirror in a room in the Borland Block in Chicago, with plaster over all of his face except the eyes. He was breathing through quills stuck through the plaster and into his nose. It was part of what he had to go through for the sculptor Leonard Volk, who wanted to make a bust of him. Every morning after breakfast for several days he went to Volk's studio. As he came in on a Sunday morning, he remarked to Volk that a friend at the Tremont House had asked him to go to church but he preferred sitting for the bust. And as Volk told it afterward, Lincoln explained: "The fact is, I don't like to hear cut-and-dried sermons. When I hear a man preach, I like to see him act as if he were fighting bees."

Volk one day took a collection of photographs he had made in Rome and Florence, and tried to interest Lincoln in Roman art, in the way that he, Volk, was interested. And as Volk later told it: "I held the photographs up and explained them to him, but I noticed a growing weariness, and his eyelids closed occasionally as if he were sleepy, or were thinking of something besides Grecian and Roman statuary and architecture. Finally he said: 'These things must be very interesting to you, Mr. Volk; but the truth is I don't know much of history, and all I do know of it I have learned from law books.' "

As he posed, Lincoln rambled along through story after story, keeping away from politics and religion, and remarking once, "I am bored nearly every time I sit down to a public dining table by some one pitching into me on politics."

Volk finished the head, and at the final sitting had Lincoln

strip off his clothes so as to show the bare shoulders and breast. Lincoln unbuttoned his undershirt, pulled it down the required distance, tied the sleeves behind him, and stood posing for an hour. The sitting came to an end. Volk offered to help him dress, Lincoln replying, "No, I can do it better alone." Volk went on working and Lincoln left in a hurry, after a warm handshake and, "Good-by, I will see you again soon."

Volk heard Lincoln's boots on the stairway, going down. Then the stairway was quiet a few moments. And again the sound of Lincoln's boots were on the stairs. He was coming at a fast pace. He came into the studio in a hurry, saying, "I got down on the sidewalk and found I had forgotten to put on my undershirt, and thought it wouldn't do to go through the streets this way."

The sleeves that he had tied behind his back had bulged out or come loose. He had forgotten to put his arms into his undershirt sleeves. Volk helped him undress and redress while they both laughed.

Chapter 140

The editor of *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* had 170,000 subscribers, and figured he had a million readers, about the time Lincoln was looming as a dark horse in the race for the presidential nomination. And the editor of *Harper's* was telling his million readers his sober reflections on American politics of that time. "Corruption is no doubt extensively practiced," he wrote. "It is probably even more common than might be inferred from the tone of the press; perhaps more prevalent than the same form of profligacy in any other first-class nation." He referred to a man "whom it cost ten thousand dollars to be nominated for Congress," to other prices paid for nominations, to the buying of votes; "at every election many votes are bought." He spoke of New York assemblymen, "ready to sell," how they were publicly accused and dared not reply. And, "the party

bold enough to be their accuser had itself no higher interests in view than those of a vast money corporation, and the distribution of canal contracts."

The editor of *Harper's* wrote as though his million readers agreed with his facts; he didn't have to name names. Not merely in New York would they understand but in Wisconsin, where a joint select committee of the legislature was to publish a report showing that the La Crosse & Milwaukee Railroad Company obtained valuable land grants by distributing $175,000 of stock and bonds among thirteen senators, $350,000 among assemblymen, $50,000 to the governor, $10,000 to the lieutenant-governor and bank-comptroller, $5,000 to the private secretary to the governor, $5,000 to the chief clerk of the assembly, $10,000 to the assistant chief clerk.

Washington, however, should be pointed to as the place where "long experience had developed corruption and brought it to perfection." In other places bribery, buying and selling government favors "is a propensity," but in Washington "it is an art." Thus, wrote the editor of *Harper's*, "United States officers are seen employing spies and mouchards, who perjure themselves for so much a week, and imperil our foreign relations. Clerks in the customhouse are openly in the pay of merchants, serving both buyer and seller. Members of Congress begin by sharp practice, to use a mild expression, on their mileage. They vote themselves a thousand dollars or two apiece in the shape of books, for which the people pay, and which they sell."

A man running for office had better figure at the start on money favors or money obstacles. Seats in Congress had been bought with money; this was a "general fact," also it was "notorious." Mail contracts, monopolies of patents, other favors were in the hands of the Government. And "a list of the real stockholders in the railway companies which have lately obtained grants of alternate sections of land, and also of the parties interested in internal improvements, would be instructive reading. Particulars of individual acts of corruption are not readily ascertainable, and, when ascertained, not always safe to publish."

Cynical foreigners were saying of American politics, "On all sides one hears of nothing but the spoils." Without promises and arrangements as to offices and favors, a candidate was beaten before he began running. "Here and there the feeble voice of a philosopher or a greenhorn mutters something about principle, but his utterance is drowned in the hoarse croak of the practical men who clamor for spoils."

The editor of *Harper's* warned the country. Unless "the intelligent people" woke up and took a hand in real politics, the country might soon pass into the hands of "Vigilance Committees or an Augustus or a Bonaparte."

And yet again, looking at business and industrial America, one felt the future of America was to swarm with forces of history. The editor of *Harper's* told his million readers the future would take care of itself. There was "a common saying." It ran, "A special Providence watches over children, drunkards, and the United States."

And the editor surveyed the past. "The United States, during the last eighty years, has endowed the world with the lightning-rod, the steamboat, the photograph, the electric telegraph, the discovery of the use of inhaled ether, the sewing machine; the best and cheapest farm implements, the best carpenter's tools, the best locks, fire-engines, nails, spikes, screws, and axes; the best firearms, the cheapest clocks, the fastest steamers and sailing vessels, the cheapest railroads, and the lightest wagons, and many labor-saving machines. If any nation, during the same eighty years, has done more, or as much, the fact is not generally known."

In arts of peace and war America was leading the world. "In bridges we challenge the world. In lightness, elegance, and strength, some American bridges are unsurpassed; and more than one of the finest bridges in Europe were designed by an American." Four hundred plows had been invented within fifty years. "The world has produced no printing-press equal to that of Adams of Boston," wrote the editor of *Harper's*. And, "At Sebastopol both Russian and Allied officers preferred the Colt's

revolver to any other holster or belt weapon; the bodyguard of the Emperor of China is said to have made the same sensible choice. Wherever men or beasts are to be shot—Sharpe's, Perry's, Wesson's—are household words." And the editor wrote how machinery had made one man as a thousand, and a thousand as a million, and as he looked at science and industry he could hear "mysterious voices whispering forth majestic prophecies of a new future." He ended a panegyric, "The age has surely come for a new order of humanity, a new answer to the anthem, 'Peace on Earth.' If the nations still follow their insane game, it will be in the face of the solemn intervention of the heralds of God's truce."

Thus ran a few elusive outlines of the civilization of the United States in the months when Davis, Fell, Swett, Dubois, Herndon, Medill, and Ray were running their dark horse, Abraham Lincoln, in the race for a presidential nomination in 1860.

Chapter 141

Lincoln had a way of slipping through a door into a roomful of men so that he was there and had seen them before they saw him. His feet, though large, had cat-sinews; he was swift and sure in movements at certain moments; when aroused there was a panther subtlety about him.

"He never misled me by word or deed," said Senator Trumbull, noting that other politicians referred to Lincoln as having "the cunning of a fox."

Lincoln murmured to Whitney one day: "Judd and Ray and those fellows think I don't see anything, but I see all around them; I see better what they want to do than they do themselves."

A Kansas politician, Mark W. Delahay, had come Lincoln's way. Delahay was not of the strictly respectable elements of politics, at all. But Lincoln reached out for Delahay. He had written Delahay two letters, of the same date, each for a different

purpose. One was familiar, confidential, to a political co-worker; the other was ceremonial, dressed up.

These two letters show the shaded gradations of human address of which Lincoln was capable. Some who wished to solve him easily and dismiss him offhand called him a trimmer or let him pass with "sly as a fox." The two letters read:

SPRINGFIELD, Oct. 17, 1859.

DEAR DELAHAY:

Your letter requesting me to drop a line in your favor to Gen. Lane was duly received. I have thought it over and concluded it is not the best way. Any open attempt on my part would injure you; and if the object be merely to assure Gen. Lane of my friendship for you, show him the letter herewith enclosed. I never saw him, or corresponded with him; so that a letter directly from me to him, would run a great hazard of doing harm to both you and me.

As to the pecuniary matter about which you formerly wrote me, I again appealed to our friend Turner by letter, but he never answered. I can but repeat to you that I am so pressed myself, as to be unable to assist you, unless I could get it from him.

Yours as ever,
A. LINCOLN.

(Enclosure)

SPRINGFIELD, Oct. 17, 1859.

M. W. DELAHAY, Esq.

My Dear Sir: I hear your name mentioned for one of the seats in the U. S. Senate from your new state. I certainly would be gratified with your success; and if there was any proper way for me to give you a lift, I would certainly do it. But as it is, I can only wish you well. It would be improper for me to interfere; and if I were to attempt it, it would do you harm.

Your friend, as ever,
A. LINCOLN.

P.S. Is not the election news glorious?
We shall hear of Delahay again.

Lincoln wrote to an Ohio delegate, of the coming national Republican convention in Chicago, that Seward "is the very best candidate we could have for the North of Illinois, and the very *worst* for the South of it." With Chase of Ohio it would be like-

wise in Illinois. Bates of Missouri would be the best candidate for the South of Illinois and the worst for the North. "I am not the fittest person to answer the questions you ask about candidates. When not a very great man begins to be mentioned for a very great position, his head is very likely to be a little turned." With Senator Trumbull he could be easier in speech. "As you request, I will be entirely frank. The taste *is* in my mouth a little." He did honestly have some hankerings for the Presidency. "And this, no doubt, disqualifies me, to some extent, to form correct opinions." After which he made the same points for Trumbull that he had made for the Ohio delegate.

His own philosophy of personal conduct in politics, the scrupulous caution that gave rise to the whisper of "cunning as a fox," yet which he considered sagacity, horse sense, or some quality necessary for the growth and unity of a party organization, was seen in his writing to Trumbull: "A word now for your own special benefit. You better write no letters which can possibly be distorted into opposition or quasi-opposition to me. There are men on the constant watch for such things out of which to prejudice my peculiar friends against you." The old Whig Republicans, and the former Democrats turned Republican, were sore and growling. "While I have no more suspicion of you than I have of my best friend living, I am kept in a constant struggle against suggestions of this sort. I have hesitated some to write this paragraph, lest you should suspect I do it for my own benefit, and not for yours; but on reflection I conclude you will not suspect me." He hinted at his code as to personal secrets. "Let no eye but your own see this—not that there is anything wrong, or even ungenerous, in it; but it would be misconstrued."

The Ohio delegate wrote to Lincoln again, asking "the lay of the land." Lincoln replied on May 2, the national convention that would name or reject him being just two weeks ahead: "First I think the Illinois delegation will be unanimous for me at the start; and no other delegation will. A few individuals in other delegations would like to go for me at the start, but may be restrained by their colleagues. It is represented to me by men

who ought to know, that the whole of Indiana might not be difficult to get. You know how it is in Ohio. I am certainly not the first choice there; and yet I have not heard that anyone makes any positive objection to me. It is just so everywhere as far as I can perceive. Everywhere, except here in Illinois and possibly in Indiana, one or another is preferred to me, but there is no positive objection." On May 12 his friends Jesse K. Dubois and Judge David Davis would probably be in Chicago "ready to confer with friends from other States." To an Indiana delegate and others, he wrote they could see Dubois and Davis.

He wrote to another Ohio delegate, expressing thanks for confidence, and pointing to his one biggest advantage as a candidate: "If I have any chance, it consists mainly in the fact that the whole opposition would vote for me, if nominated. (I don't mean to include the pro-slavery opposition of the South, of course.) My name is new in the field, and I suppose I am not the first choice of a very great many." And in two sentences there was a shading of color, an indication of the philosophy that often governed Lincoln in tight places. He wrote: "Our policy, then, is to give no offense to others—leave them in a mood to come to us if they shall be compelled to give up their first love. This, too, is dealing justly with all, and leaving us in a mood to support heartily whoever shall be nominated."

The Kansas politician, Mark Delahay, asked for money, Lincoln replying: "Allow me to say I can not enter the ring on a money basis—first, because, in the main it is wrong; and secondly, I have not, and can not get, the money. I say, in the main, the use of money is wrong; but for certain objects, in a political contest, the use of some is both right and indispensable." He had known Delahay a year or two. "With me, as with yourself, this long struggle has been one of great pecuniary loss." And the nub of the letter was reached: "I now distinctly say this: If you shall be appointed a delegate to Chicago, I will furnish one hundred dollars to bear the expenses of the trip." In a second letter to Delahay, he closed, "Come along to the convention, and I will do as I said about expenses."

Open prairies of 1830 witness the arrival of a city of 110,000 people in thirty years: Chicago in 1860.

From a contemporary print in author's collection

The Wigwam, Lake and Market Streets, Chicago, May, 1860. The Republican Party national convention here nominates the dark horse candidate, Lincoln, for President of the United States.

Photograph from Chicago Historical Society Collection

Opposition to Lincoln for the presidential nomination came from several of his friends. Browning of Quincy, for instance, had tried law cases associated with Lincoln, and had often spent evenings at the Lincoln home in Springfield. Browning had not changed in his view as written in his diary in February: "At night Lincoln came to my room, and we had a free talk about the Presidency. He thinks I may be right in supposing Bates to be the strongest and best man we can run—that he (Bates) can get votes even in this county that he (Lincoln) cannot get—and that there is a large class of voters in all the free States that would go for Mr. Bates, and for no other man. Dick Yates and Phillips also think Mr. Bates stronger in this State than any other man who has been named." The same view was held by the *New York Tribune,* which was backing Bates to beat Seward.

A little heart-warming piece of news came to Lincoln one day. John Hanks had come out for him for President. It was a sign. John Hanks and he had split rails, toiled in cornfield and on flatboat together, sleeping and watching in snow and rain. Their lives were bound as with leather thongs. But until now John had been a Democrat. Even two years previous John had voted for Douglas. That honest John Hanks's heart had been reached was a sign. Were the plain people seeing something? Was there an undertow of new history in the making?

Into the state Republican convention, on May 9, came John Hanks carrying two fence rails with flags and streamers tied to them, and the inscription, "Abraham Lincoln, the Rail Candidate for President in 1860: Two rails from a lot of 3,000 made in 1830 by Thos. Hanks and Abe Lincoln—whose father was the first pioneer of Macon County." Shouts followed: "Lincoln! Lincoln! Speech!"

A committee escorted him to the platform. He thanked them; a sober face; no smile. Cheers: "Three times three for Honest Abe, our next President." Again came John Hanks and a committee with fence rails, shouting, "Identify your work." "I cannot say that I split these rails," and to the committee, "Where did you get the rails?" "At the farm you improved down on

the Sangamon." "Well, that was a long time ago. It is possible I may have split these rails, but I cannot identify them." Shouts from the convention: "Identify your work! Identify your work!"

The sober face of the candidate was loosening into a smile. "What kind of timber are they?" he asked, getting the swing of the fun. "Honey locust and black walnut." "Well, that is lasting timber," and, scrutinizing the rails, "It may be that I split these rails," and scrutinizing further, "Well, boys, I can only say that I have split a great many better-looking ones."

Thus the Rail Candidate was baptized, and the pet name of Rail-splitter was born. It was more important that the convention instructed its delegates to the Chicago convention to vote as a unit for Lincoln; seven of the twenty-two delegates personally preferred Seward. And was there a foretoken in Dick Yates, the nominee for governor, the curly-headed and handsome Dick Yates, crying, "Let us hope that the South will not attempt to destroy this Union; but, if it should, flaming giants will spring from every cornfield in the State of Illinois"?

Yet there were peculiar undercurrents against Lincoln. Browning, for instance, who had tried cases with Lincoln and dined often at the Lincoln home, was for Bates for President. Oglesby and other delegates had walked with Lincoln out to a quiet place on a railroad track where they sat down and talked. Oglesby was in favor of cutting off Browning from the list of delegates to the Chicago national convention. Lincoln advised that this would make an enemy of Browning and he might then do more mischief than if he were sent to Chicago as a member of a delegation instructed to vote as a unit for Lincoln's nomination. "Lincoln sat on one of the railroad rails and his legs nearly reached clean across to the other rail," said Oglesby, telling later about the railroad-track conference that guided the Decatur convention.

Only two weeks earlier, the national Democratic convention had met in Charleston, South Carolina, and the Douglas delegates, holding a majority control, but lacking the necessary two-

thirds to nominate their man for President, had split the party, and two separate wings of it were planning conventions in June; the powerful political body that had controlled the Government practically thirty years was staggering. The answers of Douglas to Lincoln in the Freeport debate had shown him to be a straddler; the trust of the South in him, once so loyal, was gone; he was slippery, greased with expedients; with Douglas their property was not safe.

Yancey of Alabama, tall, slender, with long black hair, spoke in a soft, musical voice for the minority, the first time in generations of men that the South was in a minority and without the votes to name the candidate for President. The southern gentlemen had cheered, the southern ladies filling the galleries had waved handkerchiefs. It was a moment of history. Yancey pronounced a swan song. "We came here with one great purpose, to save our Constitutional rights. We are in the minority, as we have been taunted here today. In the progress of civilization, the Northwest has grown up from an infant in swaddling-clothes into the free proportions of a giant people. We therefore, as the minority, take the rights, the mission, and the position of the minority."

Yancey was dealing with the fact. The Northwest had grown up; Douglas had captured it politically, and thereby made the South a political minority, in the Democratic party; and Douglas had swung its power as a big stick, and was calling for a platform pledge to abide by the Dred Scott decision or any future decision of the Supreme Court on the rights of property in the states or territories.

"The proposition you make," said Yancey, "will bankrupt us of the South. Ours is the property invaded—ours the interests at stake. The honor of our children, the honor of our females, the lives of our men, all rest upon you. You would make a great seething caldron of passion and crime if you were able to consummate your measures."

Douglas men blamed the convention chairman, Caleb Cushing, the Boston lawyer, and close friend of Jefferson Davis, for rul-

ings; a Douglas rhymer wrote, "A poisonous reptile, many-scaled, and with most subtle fang, Crawled forward, Caleb Cush, while behind his rattles rang."

Ten days of speeches, ballots, wrangles, brought adjournment to Baltimore in June. Caleb Cushing uttered the dirge, "I fondly trust that we shall continue to march on forever, the hope of nations in the old world as in the new."

And little Alexander Stephens, weighing less than ninety pounds, with black eyes smoldering, "the little pale star from Georgia," blazed out, in a talk with a friend: "Men will be cutting one another's throats in a little while. In twelve months we shall be in a war, the bloodiest in history." But why civil war, even if a Republican President were elected? "Because," murmured the Little Pale Star, "there are not virtue and patriotism and sense enough left in the country to avoid it."

In the Senate at Washington, Davis and Douglas clashed. "I would sooner have an honest man on any sort of a rickety platform than to have a man I did not trust on the best platform which could be made," said Davis, drawing from Douglas the question, "Why did you not tell us in the beginning that the whole fight was against the man and not upon the platform?"

Senator Seward of New York gazed on what was happening and felt satisfied. He had started for his home in Auburn, New York, to write his letter accepting the Republican nomination for President. Would he not have more delegates to start with than any other candidate, and was not there a trend for him even in the Illinois and Indiana delegations? And his manager, Thurlow Weed, was rigging a plan which, according to a letter of William Cullen Bryant, was "to give charters for a set of city railways in New York, for which those who receive them are to furnish a fund of from four to six hundred thousand dollars, to be expended for the Republican cause in the next Presidential election"? Bankers, railroad presidents, business men who wanted Government grants were putting their trust in Weed.

In Springfield, Judge Logan, the little frowsy-headed lawyer

who used to sit on the circuit-court bench and hold court in a gray linen shirt without a necktie, was having a new silk hat made by Adams the hatter. Other delegates were outfitting with silk hats and broadcloth suits of clothes, to go to the Chicago convention on May 16. Lincoln wrote to Solomon Sturges, the Chicago banker, thanks for proffered hospitality during the convention. He had decided to stay home. "I am a little too much a candidate to stay home and not quite enough a candidate to go."

Chapter 142

THE Massachusetts lawyer and Buchanan Democrat, Caleb Cushing, sometimes spilled an utterance having the flow and color of poetry. Thus it was with his saying, "The sceptre of power in this Union is to be held hereafter by those vast regions of the West, state after state stretching out like star beyond star in the blue depths of the firmament, far away to the shores of the Pacific. Massachusetts and South Carolina will together be as clay in the fingers of the potter, when the great West shall stretch forth its arm of power, as ere long it will, to command the destiny of the Union."

This poetic fact had operated to give Chicago the national convention of the Republican party. The Lincoln men had made a special point of getting the convention for Chicago. But their main argument was not that Chicago was a garden city and a centre of art and traditions. They challenged the national committee, "Listen to us or run a chance of losing the West."

Chicago was the location of the heartbeats of the Northwest which Yancey of Alabama said had grown "from an infant in swaddling-clothes to the free proportions of a giant people." Its poets called it "The Queen City of the West," also "The Garden City." One guide-book styled the big stockyards four miles south on a flat prairie "The Great Bovine City of the World." It was in 1860 a city of 110,000 people, handling hogs, cattle,

corn, farming machinery, and the associated finance, transportation, trade, and politics; the depot, crossroads, and point of exchange, of buying and selling, for thousand-mile prairies. Pianos and parlor organs, carpets and rugs, barouches and wigs, diamonds and jewelry were on sale; artists had settled down and were painting portraits of prominent citizens in boiled shirts. Restaurant windows had cubes of ice with live frogs sprawling over them by the dozen.

January Searle bid for trade at Wiggers's picture-frame and looking-glass shop on Randolph Street, by writing, "While standing in the elegant salon in Marble Terrace, Michigan Avenue, before a grand French plate mirror, extending from the ceiling to the floor, reflecting the beauties of the lake and sky, and looking like a sea of glass surrounded by a golden shore, we involuntarily exclaimed, 'If this be not the highest ideal of domestic luxury, where shall wealth or fancy go to find it?'"

Coronets of pearls arched in the hair of girls whose fathers twenty-six years before had gone out with the whole town to kill a prowling black bear, and, after shooting the bear, had made a day of it and killed forty wolves.

Hogs and corn, railroads, steamboats, harvesting machinery, and a plentiful stream of wage labor, operating on virgin prairies, had in six years shot grain-export totals from 12,000,000 to 30,000,000 bushels. Its slaughterhouses were starting to pack dressed pork and beef in million-pound cargoes. "The hog eats the corn, and Europe eats the hog. Corn thus becomes incarnate; for what is a hog, but fifteen or twenty bushels of corn on four legs?"

The hog was one of life's comic items to Chicagoans. "Last week," said a newspaper one day, "32,900 hogs were received in this city. Allow each hog one yard, and we have a line of pork nineteen miles long. Somebody suggests computation of sausages implied. Think of a sausage extending a double line between this city and Milwaukee. Some hog, some sausage, great country." A pig fight staged before two or three hundred spectators was reported. "They fought like two brave pigs, long

and well; they had skill, pluck and bottom. One was christened Morrissey, and the other Heenan, and, after fighting more than an hour, Morrissey bowed his tail, acknowledging himself vanquished."

Longhorn cattle fed on shortgrass ranges, hundreds of miles from a railroad, came in trains of stock cars, grinding their horns between the slats of the cars, lean brothers of the buffalo; drovers and cowboys carrying goads with sharpened nails at the end, and wearing five-gallon hats on their merry heads, hunted the saloons where women and girls drank with men and there were no Ten Commandments.

Lifted over the town as memorials and hopes were the tall, overshadowing grain elevators at the railroad yards and the river wharves; silhouettes at the sunset sky line with statements that though man doth not live by bread alone he must have bread if he is to have breath.

Bread for man's stomach, ideas and opinions for his mind radiated from Chicago. McCormick was sending out more than 50,000 reapers a year. Medill was saying, "Chicago is the pet Republican city of the Union, the point from which radiate opinions which more or less influence six states."

The *Cleveland Plain-Dealer* flung a taunt. "Lake Michigan is situated on Chicago. The principal productions of Chicago are corner lots, statistics, and wind. The population of Chicago is about sixteen million and is rapidly increasing." He was answered by Chicago newspapers. "We trust the editor of the *Plain-Dealer* will visit us again."

Women in balloonish hoop skirts walked the streets lightly and gracefully with the wind, and otherwise against the wind. Loafers sat on benches under the trees of the courthouse square. Along the plank pavements drove teams and wagons, horses and buggies, glossy steeds hitched to phaëtons and barouches. Hackmen at the railroad depots and at street corners barked at strangers, "Hack, sir, hack, sir." They knew the town and would drive farmers to respectable quarters or to saloons, gambling-rooms, haunts of folly and sin.

From the edge of Lake Michigan to Michigan Avenue was a slope of sandy beach. Iron bridges crossed the river at Rush Street and Van Buren Street. At Madison and Dearborn streets was a mudhole where teams and wagons often had hard pulling.

Under miles of sidewalks of wooden planks lived armies of rats. When a German university graduate found all hotels full and wandered with his valise till he was tired and sat down on a sidewalk to think it over, he found that under the planks "rats in incalculable numbers had made their nests." It was night. "Troops of rats I saw moving about in the gaslight. As I was sitting still, they playfully scampered over my feet. Efforts to scare them away proved unavailing. I sought another curb-stone, but the rats were there, too." A policeman told him of a good second-class hotel. "But an inspection of the bed by candlelight utterly discouraged every thought of undressing." On reaching Wisconsin and telling his story, he said, "I spent the rest of the night in a chair, as sure as my name is Carl Schurz." Grocers and butchers threw into back alleys barrels and boxes of decayed apples and oranges, scraps of meat and sheep-feet. More than a thousand saloons ran free-lunch counters; sample rooms, beer tunnels, weinstubes, summer gardens, winter gardens, road houses, liquor stores, taverns, grog-shops, bought casks of beer unloaded by brewery wagon drivers wearing leather aprons.

The Northwestern Sabbath Convention declared "immigrants from foreign and despotic countries have learned in their native land to hate the established religion and the Sabbath law as part of it," and this influx "calls on us for special prayer and labor to reclaim them from this fatal error." Ministers pointed to conditions. "Here in Chicago, we have fifty-six churches open on Sunday, during the forenoon and evening, but at the same time there are no less than eighty ballrooms, in each of which a band plays from morning till midnight, and waltzing goes on without intermission. In addition to these festivities, we have two theatres, each with its performers in tights and very short

garments. Saloons have their front doors closed by proclamation, but do a thriving business through side entrances."

In and out of this place of human swarming, named Chicago, ran fifteen railways with 150 railroad trains a day; and on May 16 of 1860 they had brought 40,000 strangers and 500 delegates to the Republican national convention. At the corner of Lake and Market streets the Sauganash Hotel, kept by Alderman John Murphy, had been torn down, and a lumber shack, to hold 10,000 people, had been put up and named the Wigwam.

Chapter 143

"The Republican girls of the city are invited to meet tomorrow at the Wigwam," a newspaper urged one day; they should come "armed and equipped with those formidable weapons, needles, thimbles, scissors," and there would be young men with "tacks and hammers," to help decorate for the convention. They draped and festooned the interior, and on May 12 it was opened for a mass meeting, appearing, said the *Chicago Journal,* "large with golden promise of a glorious harvest of truth." The governors of Indiana and Maine spoke, also the antislavery war horse, Joshua R. Giddings, from the cheese region of Ohio, and Delegate-at-large Johns from Iowa, who had walked 150 miles to take the steam cars to the convention; he said he was happy to look into their shining faces.

At the Richmond House, Thurlow Weed set up Seward headquarters and called in various state delegations and addressed them with pleasant arguments. Six Kansas delegates entered his parlor and sat at a round table. His face was sparkling, winning; every move and word gracious; he spoke to each delegate by name, and familiarly, a little as though he had been a college chum or boyhood schoolmate; he complimented them all on the good work border states were doing for the Republican cause, and added: "We think we have in Mr. Seward just the qualities the country will need. He is known by us all as a

statesman. As governor of New York he has shown splendid executive ability. As senator he has shown himself to be a statesman, and a political philosopher. He will make a candidate to whom our people can look with a feeling of security. We expect to nominate him on the first ballot, and to go before the country full of courage and confidence."

Weed thanked them each again, and gave them each a handshake. One of the Kansas men, Addison G. Procter, said afterward: "As he stood at our table, so gracious, so assuring, so genial and friendly, with all our previous estimate of him dispelled, I was reminded of Byron's picture of his 'Corsair,' as 'the mildest-mannered man that ever scuttled a ship or cut a throat,' politically, of course." Also into the Seward headquarters came Carl Schurz, one of the Wisconsin delegation solid for Seward; he had heard of Weed, the skilled "wire-puller"; he watched Weed in the lobbies, and said afterward, "The tall man with his cold, impassive face and the mysterious whisper of his high voice, gave directions to a lot of henchmen, the looks and talk of many of whom made me fear that if Mr. Seward were elected President he might find himself burdered with obligations he would not be able to meet without dishonor." The New York boss and Seward reminded Schurz of Mephistopheles and Faust. Weed asked Schurz to mix with as many delegates as possible and tell all that no candidate could possibly receive as many German votes as Seward.

Mark W. Delahay showed Procter a telegram from Lincoln. Delahay had wired Lincoln that Seward was going to win, so it looked, and when that happened, would Lincoln be willing to run as candidate for Vice President? Lincoln's telegram said he would take second place on the ticket if his friends thought it wise.

Delahay was not a delegate but had come along with the Kansas delegates on railroad fare sent him by Lincoln. He was mixing with delegates and telegraphing Lincoln his guesses on the race.

Delegate Knapp wrote to Lincoln two days before the conven-

tion opened: "Things are working. Keep a good nerve. We are laboring to make you the second choice of all the delegations we can, where we can't make you first choice. We are dealing tenderly with delegates, taking them in detail and making no fuss. Be not too expectant, but rely upon our discretion. Again I say, brace your nerves for any result."

Horace Greeley carried a hatchet for Seward; he listed four states sure to be lost if Seward ran. Governor Curtin of Pennsylvania was saying his state would come along with a 50,000 majority, but not if Seward ran. On the ramshackle walls of the Wigwam, Weed might have seen the shadow of a tomahawk. The Wigwam stood in a land of ambushes.

At the Lincoln headquarters in the Tremont House, Davis, Dubois, Swett, Logan, Oglesby, and others were nailing down the Pennsylvania and Indiana delegations for Lincoln. "We worked like nailers," said Oglesby. Ray of the *Tribune* came to his chief, Medill. "We are going to have Indiana for Old Abe, sure." "How did you get it?" asked Medill. "By the Lord, we promised them everything they asked."

Indiana was nailed down; Caleb B. Smith was to be Secretary of the Interior and William P. Dole, Commissioner of Indian Affairs; Indiana would vote a solid block for Lincoln on the first ballot. The next prospect was Pennsylvania, with its block of fifty-six delegates wearing white hats; they would vote for Simon Cameron, complimenting a favorite son, on the first ballot, and then were willing to go elsewhere.

Judge Davis dickered with them; Dubois telegraphed Lincoln the Cameron delegates could be had if Cameron was promised the Treasury Department. Lincoln wired back, "I authorize no bargains and will be bound by none." Herndon brought out a message from Lincoln carried to Chicago by E. L. Baker of the Springfield *Journal;* it was a copy of a newspaper with markings of Seward speeches, with the marginal notes, "I agree with Seward's 'irrepressible conflict,' but do not agree with his 'higher law' doctrine." And the added underlined words, "Make no contracts that will bind me."

What happened among Lincoln's convention managers was told by Whitney: "The bluff Dubois said, 'Damn Lincoln!' The polished Swett said, 'I am very sure if Lincoln was aware of the necessities——' The critical Logan expectorated. 'The main difficulty with Lincoln is——' Herndon ventured, 'Now, friend, I'll answer that.' But Davis cut the Gordian knot by brushing all aside with, 'Lincoln ain't here, and don't know what we have to meet, so we will go ahead as if we hadn't heard from him, and he must ratify it.' "

In that mood they went to the room of the Pennsylvania managers. When they were through they came down to the lobby of the Tremont House, where Joe Medill of the *Tribune* was waiting. Medill had been smoking and thinking about a remark of Lincoln's that Pennsylvania would be important in the convention. "He wanted that big Pennsylvania foot brought down on the scale."

As Medill saw Judge Davis come heaving and puffing down the stairs about midnight, he stepped up to the judge and, as he told of it later, he said he asked the judge what Pennsylvania was going to do, and Judge Davis replied, "Damned if we haven't got them." "How did you get them?" "By paying their price."

Then along came Ray, who had sat in and heard. And Medill asked his editor how Pennsylvania had been nailed down. "Why," said Ray, "we promised to put Simon Cameron in the Cabinet. They wanted assurances that we represented Lincoln, and he would do what we said." "What have you agreed to give Cameron?" asked Medill. "The Treasury Department." "Good heavens! Give Cameron the Treasury Department? What will be left?" "Oh, what is the difference?" said Ray. "We are after a bigger thing than that; we want the Presidency and the Treasury is not a great stake to pay for it."

And so, with three state delegations solid, and with odd votes from Ohio and other states, the Lincoln men waited for the balloting, seeing to it, however, that the convention seating committee carefully sandwiched the Pennsylvania delegation between Illinois and Indiana. "Thurlow Weed is a sly old fellow." Also,

on the night before the opening day, they had a Pennsylvania congressman take the floor at a mass meeting in the convention hall and talk till midnight so there wasn't time for a planned program of Seward speeches.

The convention was called to order. David Wilmot, the proviso man, was elected chairman; a platform was adopted, leaving out mention of the Declaration of Independence, and old Joshua R. Giddings arose, snorted contempt and said it was time to leave the Republican party. He was about ready to put on his hat and walk out when dapper young George William Curtis stood up and shamed the convention, and the principle of the equality of men was written in so as to satisfy Giddings.

Seward victory was in the air; champagne fizzed at the Richmond House. Straw votes on all incoming railroad trains had given Seward overwhelming majorities. Six hundred friends, delegates and henchmen, marched and cheered for Seward, their band playing, "Oh, Isn't He a Darling!" The upper tier of three states of the Northwest, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, were a unit for Seward. The New York, Massachusetts, and California delegations were pledged to give their totals to Seward. Horace Greeley, a Seward enemy, wired his *New York Tribune* before nominating day that Seward seemed sure to win. Seward sat in his home in Auburn, New York, ready to send a message of acceptance, stirred with the same fond expectations that had led Henry Clay and Daniel Webster. And as with them, mice nibbled, gnawed in the cellar of fate.

Seward had a record; and Lincoln workers, in the three delegations nailed down for Lincoln, were shaking this record as a red rag; the Republican candidates for governor in these three states were saying with clenched fists and blazing eyes that they were beaten at the start if Seward ran, and they could win with 10,000 to 50,000 majority with Lincoln; the "irrepressible conflict" and the "higher law" and the New York traction campaign fund were used as arguments and flung forth with sentiment till they scared some of the politicians who wanted to win; and again there were antislavery men such as Bryant of the *New York Evening Post*

who believed Seward to be the same type as Daniel Webster, much intellect, little faith, none of the "mystic simplicity" of Lincoln.

Ward Hill Lamon had been to the printers of seat-tickets to the convention hall. And a staff of young men kept busy nearly a whole night signing names of convention officers to seat-tickets so that the next day the Lincoln bucks could jam the hall and leave no room for the Seward shouters to get in.

Hour on hour the bulk of the 40,000 strangers in Chicago kept up a shouting and a tumult for Abraham Lincoln, for Old Abe, for the Rail Candidate. Judd had fixed it with the railroads so that any shouter who wished to come could set foot in Chicago at a low excursion rate. Men illuminated with moral fire, and also men red-eyed with whisky, yelled and pranced and cut up capers and vociferated for Lincoln. They swarmed around the ramshackle lumber convention hall as though they might lift it and carry it a half-block and drop it in the Chicago River.

This immense mob, the like of which had not theretofore been seen or approximated in the assemblages of American politics, was a factor; in what degree it influenced the convention in any view, decision, or emotional state, nobody could tell; it was an intangible. The air was charged somewhat as it was many years previous at the inauguration of Andrew Jackson, when trappers and hunters traveled hundreds of miles and watched with guns and knives ready to see their hero inaugurated, implying that some revolution or deep social or political change was in the making.

The show of human force was planned by the Lincoln managers; it surpassed expectations in its noise and intensity. On the first two days of the convention the Seward men were allowed by the Chicago managers to have free run of the floor. But on the third day the Lincoln shouters were shoved through the doors till they filled all seats and standing-room, and hundreds of New York hurrah boys couldn't squeeze in.

Nomination speeches were in single sentences. Judd said, "I desire, on behalf of the delegation from Illinois, to put in nomi-

nation, as a candidate for President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln of Illinois," while Delano of Ohio said, "I rise on behalf of a portion of the delegation from Ohio, to put in nomination the man who can split rails and maul Democrats—Abraham Lincoln."

A reporter, Murat **Halstead**, wrote of the uproar, "Imagine all the hogs ever slaughtered in Cincinnati giving their death squeals together, and a score of big steam whistles going together. I thought the Seward yell could not be surpassed; but the Lincoln boys were clearly ahead, and, feeling their victory, they gave a concentrated shriek and stamping that made every plank and pillar in the building quiver. The New York, Michigan, and Wisconsin delegations sat together and were in this tempest very quiet. Many of their faces whitened as the Lincoln *Yawp* swelled into a wild hosanna of victory."

"The idea of us Hoosiers and Suckers being outscreamed would have been bad," said Swett. "Five thousand people leaped to their seats, women not wanting, and the wild yell made vesper breathings of all that had preceded. A thousand steam whistles, ten acres of hotel gongs, a tribe of Comanches might have mingled in the scene unnoticed."

Seward had 173½ votes, Lincoln 102, and favorite sons and others the remainder of the votes on the first ballot. On the second ballot, Lincoln jumped to 181 as against Seward's 184½. On the third ballot, of the 465 votes Lincoln swept 231½ while Seward dropped to 180.

Medill of the *Tribune* whispered to Carter of Ohio, "If you can throw the Ohio delegation for Lincoln, Chase can have anything he wants." "H-how d'-d'ye know?" stuttered Carter, Medill answering, "I know, and you know I wouldn't promise if I didn't know."

Carter called for a change of four votes from his state to the Rail Candidate. Other delegates stood up to announce changes of votes to Lincoln. As the tellers footed up the totals, and the chairman waited for the figures, the chatter of 10,000 people stopped, the fluttering of ladies' fans ended, the scratching of

pencils and the clicking of the telegraph dot-dash dot-dot dash-dot-dash could be heard.

The chairman spoke. Of 466 votes, 354 were cast for the candidate highest, and, "Abraham Lincoln of Illinois is selected as your candidate for President of the United States."

Chairmen of state delegations arose and made the nomination unanimous, after which O. H. Browning of Quincy spoke the thanks of Illinois. "We struggled against the nomination of the illustrious statesman of New York, solely because we believed here that we could go into battle on the prairies of Illinois with more hope and more prospect of success under the leadership of our own noble son." He thanked them again.

The nominations ended. The terrific emotional spree was over. Strong men hugged each other, wept, laughed, and shrieked in each other's faces through tears. Judge Logan stood on a table brandishing his arms and yelling; he raised his new silk hat and brought it down on somebody's head, smashing it flat.

Inside and outside the Wigwam it was a wild noon hour: hats, handkerchiefs, umbrellas, bands, cannon, explosions, the going-down of the excitement of the wild gamble over whether Abe could be nominated.

The Minnesota delegate, Aaron Goodrich, had tried to voice the feelings of the Seward men, amid cries of "Dry up." He retorted, "I am not in the habit of being hallooed down, certainly not by friends." "If you are our friend, let us adjourn," came a hint that won a ripple of laughter across the big barn. But he must go on to say: "The representatives from Minnesota feel that a seat in the presidential chair would not add one jot to the stature of William H. Seward; of all earthly fame has he seen the vanity; lasting, exalted is his fame; whenever lofty deeds——" And at that point the stenographic reporters could catch no more of his words. They wrote, "The audience here became impatient and vociferous in their calls to proceed to business and the speaker could proceed no further." Thanks were voted to the convention president, George Ashmun of Massachusetts. He made a closing speech saying he had known

Lincoln in Congress: "the last two years has tried him by fire." The Republican party was headed for victory; and he struck the gavel for adjournment. One hundred guns at the Tremont House, steamboat whistles on the river and lake, steam-engine whistles in railroad yards and at factories, and the iron and brass bells of church steeples set up a clangor and a tintinnabulation that came to no quiet end for twenty-four hours; prairie towns tried to rival the Chicago jubilee.

Thurlow Weed had pressed the temples of his forehead to hold back tears. Horace Greeley wrote a letter telling a friend it was a fearful week he hoped never to see repeated. "If you had seen the Pennsylvania delegation, and known how much money Weed had in hand, you would not have believed we could do so well as we did. Give Curtin [Governor of Pennsylvania] credit for that. Ohio looked very bad, yet turned out well, and Virginia had been regularly sold out; but the seller could not deliver. We had to rain red-hot bolts on them, however, to keep the majority from going for Seward. Indiana was our right bower, and Missouri above praise."

In Albany, New York, a son of Senator Seward was working in the office of Weed's paper, the *Evening Journal*. He read a telegram up a tube to a printing-room foreman, "Abraham Lincoln is nominated for President on the third ballot." The foreman was hesitating; his voice spluttered back, "S-a-y, what damn name was that you said was nominated for President?"

Chapter 144

On the Friday morning of the convention, Lincoln had walked from home, as usual, to the public square, where the horses stood at their hitching-posts with serene and sober faces, as usual, and farmers with pantaloons tucked into their boots were trudging around to buy seed corn or sell hogs, as usual.

At Chatterton's jewelry store he turned into a stairway and went up to the second-story office of James C. Conkling, the

lawyer, who had just returned by night train from Chicago. With his head on a buggy cushion and his feet over the end of a settee, he listened and quizzed Conkling, and left the office saying, "Well, Conkling, I believe I will go back to my office and practice law."

Then he met E. L. Baker of the *Journal,* who had arrived by night train from Chicago, after delivering to Herndon the message from Lincoln, and watching the convention drift; Lincoln and Baker went to Carmody's ball alley for a game; the alley was full. Then, as Baker told it, they went to a saloon to play a game of billiards, but some morning billiard players had already taken the table. "We each drank a glass of beer, and then went to the *Journal* office expecting to hear the result of the convention balloting; we waited awhile; nothing came; and we parted; I went to dinner." And the horses stood at their hitching-posts around the public square with serene and sober faces, as usual, and farmers with pantaloons tucked into their boots trudged around to buy seed corn or sell hogs, as usual.

But shortly after twelve o'clock a messenger boy handed Lincoln a telegram, addressed "Abe," reading: "We did it. Glory to God!" It was from Knapp. A little flurry of telegrams followed. He told the crowd at the *Journal* office he was going out home to tell his wife the news. One heard him say, "I reckon there's a little short woman down at our house that would like to hear the news." Another heard him say: "There is a lady over yonder on Eighth Street who is deeply interested in this news; I will carry it to her."

Boxes, barrels, kindling-wood, fence rails and brushwood went up in bonfire smoke in the Sangamon River country that Friday night. As the news had come to Douglas at Washington, he smiled, "There won't be a tar barrel left in Illinois tonight." A brass band and a crowd came to Lincoln's house, surged to the front porch and asked for a speech. He told them the honor of the nomination was not for him personally but as the representative of a cause, and wished that his house were big enough so that he could ask them all to come inside. Shouts and yells

of hurrah parties kept up till the gray dawn of the morning after.

When Judge David Davis was asked what it cost to nominate Lincoln, he replied, "The entire expense of Lincoln's nomination, including headquarters, telegraphing, music, fare of delegations, and other incidentals, was less than $700."

Chapter 145

SCHEMES had been in the air to take apart the Union and put it together again as a league of republics. Senator Breckenridge of Kentucky had joined others in an attempt to found an independent Republic of the Northwest States; then the South could set up its own government, the middle and New England states could have one of their own, California and the West Coast states could organize their Far West Republic and America would be launched with a group of nations exchanging ambassadors, writing treaties, forming alliances, maintaining standing armies, and carrying on wars, just like Europe and Asia. Vallandigham of Ohio could see peace and concord in the plan.

Rev. Z. Humphrey had prayed at the national Republican convention: "O Lord, Thou hast made peace in our borders, and filled us with the finest of the wheat. Thou hast not dealt so by any nation." He had invoked help against "evils we are too apt to cherish," and concluded: "Let not the plowshare of division drive through our fair land; may we live as a Christian country."

Slave-state delegates had taken seats in the convention; Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Missouri, Kentucky, and Texas sent spokesmen. And the official report of the convention recorded that when a Kentucky delegate asked, in making the temporary organization of the convention permanent, that the names of *all* States in the union be called, there was applause. Then, said the minutes: "The Chair—Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi [great laughter], Louisiana, Alabama [laughter and hissing], Georgia, South Carolina [laughter], North Carolina, Florida

[feeble hisses and much laughter]. I believe that includes the names of all the states."

Elements that Lincoln had described as "strange and discordant, gathered from the four winds," had formed a powerful party of youth, wild banners, pilgrims of faith and candlelight philosophers. Industrial, transportation, and financial interests found this party promising. Pennsylvania, New York, New England, were satisfied as to both the tariff and the outlook for opening up the Great Plains to settlement and trade. "A railroad to the Pacific Ocean is imperatively demanded by the interests of the whole country; the Federal Government ought to render immediate and efficient aid in its construction." Thus read the Republican platform. As it was being written, a Michigan Southern train broke all previous records between Chicago and Buffalo, with a fifteen-and-a-half-hour trip.

Meetings of the heads of five trunk-line railroads were under way, aiming, said the *New York Herald,* at "the adoption of a uniform system of freights on the western roads, so as to prevent competition and rivalry between the various lines." Transportation finance was growing on a vast and involved scale. The sharp comment of the *Chicago Tribune* on the Erie Railroad muddles was only a single instance. "It were well for the Directors to inquire whether it is guarding properly the interests of the creditors of that bankrupt concern to pay President Moran $25,000 a year for his services—a salary equal to that of the President of the United States."

The Chicago Republican convention was, in part, a machine of necessity, an expression of economic forces; for one dollar of trade that the West had by the Mississippi River, she had about four dollars of trade to and from the East by wagon and rail, with the volume of east- and west-bound traffic inexorably rising in volume.

Hundreds of politicians had hitched themselves to the Republican party because it was the best bet as a winner in politics; the Government was spending $80,000,000 a year; offices, contracts, and favors lay that way; in their connections these poli-

ticians had manufacturing and mercantile interests, iron, steel, coal, oil, and railroads and steamboats.

In its platform promise to fix the tariff, to fix land and homestead laws, to fix farm and factory laws so that workingmen and business would have "prosperity and independence," the Republican party had a sincerity, was taking care of issues that counted. Business interests that wanted to be sure of a hearing with the next Washington Administration saw to it that their political workers had front seats, committee places, and influence in the new party that had the big chance to win; bankers pleased that Simon Cameron was promised the Treasury Department, and land, mining, oil, and railway interests pleased that Caleb B. Smith was to control the Interior Department, were known to Cameron and Smith; that Lincoln had wired his managers he would be tied with no pledges was known to a small clique. Lincoln's managers were known to include a millionaire landowner, railroad lawyers, tested politicians; Lincoln himself had drawn one of the largest fees ever paid by a western railroad to a lawyer. The American political and economic diagram had its paths crossed and double-crossed; its mazy mapping sprang out of the commanding issue before which all others cracked, that of Union and the wage-labor system as against disunion and slave labor. North and South, orators spoke of freedom; both regions wanted freedom; if war came each would fight for what each called freedom.

A tone of the solemn, touched with shrill falsetto, had run through speeches and airs of the convention. Fierce challenges were sent howling, sometimes, that had in previous years been known only in Abolitionist conventions; not in any political organization with a fat chance of getting hold of the Washington Government. "We wheel into line as one man, and we will roll up our 100,000 majority, and we will give you our thirteen electoral votes," John Andrew, the Massachusetts chairman, had shouted; "and we will show you that the 'irrepressible conflict' is the 'manifest destiny' of the Democracy." Carl Schurz had yelled, to a storm of cheers, "We defy the whole slave power

and the whole vassalage of hell." A cadence of exasperation, a strain of revolutionary rumble and mutter, rose, died down, and rose again.

The man in Springfield picked to carry the banner stood as a shy and furtive figure. He wanted the place—and he didn't. His was precisely the clairvoyance that knew terrible days were ahead. If he had had no reservations, if he had been in politics for power and position only, he would not have sent at least two specific messages telling his managers to make no pledges that would bind him. He had his hesitations. And he was in the end the dark horse on whom the saddle was put. He could sit and contemplate an old proverb: "The horse thinks one thing, he that saddles him another."

Chapter 146

THE chosen committee called on Lincoln at his house in Springfield to tell him formally he was nominated; he formally replied, and later sent the chairman a letter of acceptance. He would coöperate, "imploring the assistance of Divine Providence."

While he stayed in Springfield, an immense organization was in the field. Bills for printing, cash vouchers for speakers and their railroad fares and hotel bills, outlays for thousands of torches, oilcloth uniforms and caps for Wide-awake clubs, had to be met at campaign headquarters. And Judd's campaign slogan, as Whitney said, was, "Turn on the beer, boys." These were details manipulated by managers who aimed chiefly at carrying their states.

Bad feeling between New York Republicans was patched up. *Harper's Weekly* had said, "Votes were openly bought and sold last winter at the state capital; among corrupt members were Democrats as well as Republicans; but the Republicans had the majority and are responsible. It is in evidence that the most active agents of corruption at Albany were also the most active friends of Mr. Seward at Chicago. These causes appear to be

primarily responsible for Mr. Seward's rejection." The sore spots were healing; reformers and practical politicians of the party were lining up behind Lincoln in what the campaign orators called "a solid phalanx of liberty."

"Free Soil, Free Homesteads, Free Territories" was printed on banners and bunting. Rhymers declaimed:

> The glorious cause is moving on,
> The cause once led by Washington,
> The cause that made our Fathers free,
> The cause of glorious liberty.

Swett wrote to Thurlow Weed on July 4 saying Illinois prospects were excellent, and, as to politics in general, "We have not had the experience you have, and your views, expressed to me at any time, would have controlling influence." Judge David Davis kept close track of the Midwest campaign, and on August 24 wrote from Bloomington to Thurlow Weed that he had been in Indiana and found the Republican party in danger of losing that State. "They believe that with $10,000 the State can be carried, and that without 'foreign aid' they are in trouble. Their organization is not complete for lack of money. It is difficult to raise enough money to keep campaign speakers in the field. They want a number of speakers, and they have to be paid. The state is poor and the central committee has not raised what they expected. The election may run itself, as it is doing in a great many States, but, depend upon it, without pecuniary aid, there can be neither certainty nor efficiency."

Often little hooks and crooks in the running of the campaign had to be smoothed out and straightened over. Then Lincoln would call in some one, a party worker, a friend or secretary, explain what he wanted done, and then send out on his mission one whom he called "a worker in the vineyard." A long and tangled story would lie back of such a letter as he wrote to Swett on July 16 concerning "that matter mentioned by Mr. Casey."

"Want of confidence in the Centl. Com. pains me—I am afraid there is the germ of difficulty in it—Will not the men

thus suspected, and treated as proposed, rebel and make a dangerous explosion?" He advised, "When you write Mr. Casey, say to him that great caution and delicacy of action is necessary in that matter—I would like to see you and the Judge, one or both, about the matter of your going to Pa."

The two men in Illinois who probably did more than any others to keep Lincoln connected with the main cogs and campaign machinery of the Republican party through the campaign were Davis and Swett. Their relations in their errands between Illinois, New York, and Pennsylvania were indicated in a letter of Swett to Thurlow Weed, at a later time. "We should be exceedingly glad to know your wishes and your views," he wrote the New York boss, "and to serve you in any way in our power. I say this freely for myself because I feel it, and for Judge Davis, because, although now absent, I know his feelings. Of course, nobody is authorized to speak for Mr. Lincoln."

Wide-awake clubs organized and marched in torchlight processions. Seward spoke across the northern states. Batteries and flotillas of orators spoke. They argued, threatened, promised, appealed to statistics, passions, history. But the chosen spokesman of the Republican party had nothing to say. He wrote a few letters, and shook hands with orators, politicians, and reporters who came by the dozen and score out to the two-story cottage on Eighth Street. He made a short speech on August 14 when railroads, buggies, horses and ox wagons brought a crowd of more than 50,000 people to Springfield. He greeted them, half joked them. The "fight for this cause" would go on "though I be dead and gone." And he ended with the only important thing he had to say: "You will kindly let me be silent."

Public announcement by the publishers, Follet, Foster & Co., that they were issuing a biography of Lincoln, authorized by him, brought from Lincoln the statement to an Ohio man, "I have scarcely been so much astounded by anything as their announcement. I certainly knew they contemplated publishing a biography, and I certainly did not object to their doing so, upon their

own responsibility." He had even helped them. But, "At the same time, I made myself tiresome, if not hoarse, with repeating to Mr. Howard, their only agent seen by me, my protest that I authorized nothing—would be responsible for nothing." He presented further points, arguments, and observations, closing the letter, "I authorize nothing—will be responsible for nothing."

Five biographies were published in June. Medals and coins were struck, advertising soap on one side and the Republican candidate on the other. Requests for autographs came. Newspapers came. Wendell Phillips was asking, "Who is this huckster in politics?" Seward was saying, "No truer defender of the Republican faith could have been found." A *New York Evening Post* reporter sketched him: "As he gets interested in conversation his face lights up, and his gestures assume dignity. He is fluent, agreeable, and polite, a man of decided and original character. His views are all his own, worked out from a patient and varied scrutiny of life. Yet he cannot be called opinionated. He listens to others like one eager to learn. He tells a story well, with idiomatic smack, and seems to relish humor, both in himself and others."

The reporter added: "I trust I am not trespassing on the sanctities of private life, in saying a word in regard to Mrs. Lincoln. Whatever of awkwardness may be ascribed to her husband, there is none of it in her. She is quite a pattern of ladylike courtesy and polish. She converses with freedom and grace, and is thoroughly au fait. Mrs. Lincoln belongs, by the mother's side, to the Preston family of Kentucky, has received a liberal and refined education, and, should she ever reach it, will adorn the White House. She is, I am told, a strict and consistent member of the Presbyterian church."

Other newspapers came, publishing Lincoln as "a third-rate country lawyer"; he lived "in low Hoosier style"; he "could not speak good grammar"; he delivered "coarse and clumsy jokes"; he was descended from "an African gorilla." Questions came. What was his view on this or that? And his secretary, John G.

Nicolay, sent them all the same letter; his positions "were well known when he was nominated; he must not now embarrass the canvass. You perceive it is impossible for him to do so. Yours, etc., John G. Nicolay."

Streets lighted with burning tar barrels and the torches of marching Wide-Awakes, heard the campaign song with its lines:

> Old Abe Lincoln came out of the wilderness,
> Out of the wilderness, out of the wilderness,
> Old Abe Lincoln came out of the wilderness,
> Down in Illinois.

He was beginning to learn more precisely how he was food for the makers of myths. When John G. Scripps of the *Chicago Tribune* had come to him for material for a campaign biography, he told Scripps there would be nothing to it but "the short and simple annals of the poor." He toiled at shaping up a statement of the main facts of his life; it was scrupulous, careful, exact. He confessed to once shooting a wild turkey when a boy, and "never since pulled a trigger on larger game." And of young Abraham's election as captain of the New Salem Black Hawk War company, he noted, "He says he has not since had any success in life which gave him so much satisfaction."

In the Scripps sketch, as printed in the *Tribune* columns, a sentence read, "A friend says that once, when in a towering rage in consequence of the efforts of certain parties to perpetrate a fraud on the state, Mr. Lincoln was heard to say, 'They shan't do it, d—n 'em,' but beyond an expression of this kind his bitterest feelings never carried." This sentence was struck out, and not published in the Scripps biography reprinted as a pamphlet and widely circulated during the campaign.

Lincoln personally read the Scripps sketch before it was published, to correct mistakes that might have crept in. When he handed it back to Scripps he said that, before reading it, he hadn't read Plutarch, as the sketch declared, but had since gone and read Plutarch, so the statement could be published as strictly accurate.

"A scrupulous teller of the truth—too exact in his notions to suit the atmosphere of Washington as it now is," Scripps had written.

Chapter 147

Grim thoughts came to Abraham Lincoln as he sat in the two-story white cottage at Eighth and Jackson streets in Springfield during the summer of 1860. He was watching the making of a legend. He saw a powerful young political party using him, shaping his personal figure into heroic stature, coloring his personality into something beyond what it actually was, picturing him as an embodiment of excellence and of genius, a creature in whom there were resident strange magnetic qualities that he knew had never been tested, never put under the fierce fire of experience.

If he should say to himself that he would make the kind of President they said he would make, he could only say it wryly with wry laughter. If he should in the days to come prove to be the man they said he was, he knew it could only be with prayers, tears, sardonic laughter, through a wild dance of death out of which he, perhaps, could not come alive. If he should in the days to come be the historic man of speech and action, of fine wisdom and chilled-steel nerves that they promised, he would be one of God's miracles, he would be one of the storm-stars lighting the history of the world.

Yet they were saying so, they were promising, the prophecies were issuing from the mouths of hundreds of stump orators, from the columns of hundreds of newspapers. "Abe," "Old Abe," "the Rail Candidate," "the Backwoodsman," "Honest Abe," "the Man of the People," the shrewd, sagacious, eloquent Man of the Hour, one who had risen from a dirt-floor cabin of poverty, who knew by first-hand acquaintance the wrongs of the poor, the exploited, the fooled—thus he was proclaimed.

What men there had been who had gone up against the test and met it and gone down before it! What a heartbreaking

challenge there was in this thing of heading a government where vast sensitive property interests and management problems called for practical executive ability, while millions of people hungry for some mystic bread of life asked for land, roads, freedom, chances, open doors, release somehow from clutches that held them to monotony and toil!

On the one hand were those wanting refined mechanics of adjustment, and on the other hand those who wanted songs, slogans, words worth dying for! And between was a mass who lived, as the saying was, "by bread alone." They were the vast breathing, groaning, snarling, singing, murmuring, irreckonable instrument through which, and on which, history, destiny, politicians, worked—the people—the public that had to be reached for the making of public opinion.

He could only be solemn over the human note struck in the "Wigwam Edition of the Life, Speeches and Services of Abraham Lincoln," where it was declared: "Hitherto the backwoodsman has been powerful and important, it is true, but never until now has been conceded to him the first place . . . Whatever may be the result of the approaching Presidential election, it will always be distinguished for the elevation of one who had been a workingman to such preëminence as that accorded Abraham Lincoln . . . He has Revolutionary blood in his veins. The Lincolns of Massachusetts, known for their patriotism in the war of 1776, were his progenitors."

He could laugh low and feel hope over Dick Yates saying on the stump: "I know some folks are asking, who is old Abe? I guess they will soon find out. Old Abe is a plain sort of a man, about six feet four inches in his boots, and every inch of him *Man*. I recollect two years ago at a little party a very tall man went up to Lincoln and said, 'Mr. Lincoln, I think I am as tall as you are.' Lincoln began to straighten himself up and up, until his competitor was somewhat staggered. 'Well, I thought I was,' said he, now doubtful. 'But,' says Lincoln, straightening himself up still higher, *'there's a good deal of come-out in me,'* and he came out two inches the higher."

Chapter 148

THE Prince of Wales was touring America. The *New York Herald* took four columns to report a ball in Boston at which 1,080 tickets were sold at $15.00 apiece. As the prince passed through Springfield on his way to St. Louis, Lincoln told a newspaper man he would like to have welcomed or noticed the passage of the prince. "Not able to take any lead in the matter, I remained here at the Statehouse where I met so many sovereigns during the day that the prince had come and gone before I knew it." The same newspaper man to whom this was told casually asked one Springfield citizen what he thought of Lincoln, the answer being: "I like him. He talks sense, and is not too proud to sit down on his own doorstep and chat with his neighbors. I have always been a Democrat, but I am almost tempted to go for Lincoln."

An engine whistled at noon one day, bringing in a train with Senator Seward on board. Lincoln was one of the first to get on the train and shake hands with Seward. A crowd was calling, "Speech! Speech!" And Seward stepped out, to deliver the mouthful, "I am happy to express, on behalf of the party with whom I am traveling, our gratitude and acknowledgments for this kind and generous reception at the home of your distinguished fellow citizen, our excellent and honored candidate for the Chief Magistracy of the United States." Then he pledged 60,000 majority from New York, and declared that afterward New York would "ask less, exact less," from Lincoln than any other state.

Gifts arrived, a piece of white-oak wood from Josiah Crawford of Gentryville, Indiana. "It is part of a rail I cut for him in 1825 when I was sixteen years old," said Lincoln; "he sent the wood to have it made into a cane." A Terre Haute Republican sent the rib of a monster buffalo fish as a memento from a group of fishermen. "Thanks for your support and the high honor done me," he replied to letters with a certain ring

of fellowship to them. He had his smile at a New York state campaign paper, *The Ulster Rail Splitter,* publishing a straw vote from the Auburn state prison: "Abraham Lincoln, 0, Stephen A Douglas, 682, John C. Breckenridge, 200." He could not be so easy about a Chicago campaign sheet, *The Rail Splitter,* printing an editorial, "Is Douglas a Catholic?" and declaring it to be "a well-known fact that the Catholic Church will cast its vote as a unit for Douglas in the coming Presidential election."

Over the country was fighting and singing. *The New York Herald* briefly reported a duel between two Missouri politicians on October 12. "Mr. Porter was addressing a political meeting at Nodaway when Col. Harlen called him a liar. Both parties were seriously though not fatally wounded."

And young men in western towns carried guitars and sang "Gentle Annie" in the streets at night:

> Shall we never more behold thee,
> Never hear thy gentle voice again?
> When the springtime comes, gentle Annie,
> And the wildflowers are scattered o'er the plain.

Chapter 149

THERE came to Springfield a correspondent for the *New York Herald,* a scribbler whose name was never signed to his articles. And while his newspaper was hurling shrapnel, javelins, and poison at Lincoln, editorially, he was sending columns of reportorial fact and impression of just the opposite character. His policy as a writer and his personal feelings about Lincoln were as different from the editorial page of the *New York Herald* as day is from night.

He liked Lincoln's looks, face, ways, and wrote: "Mr. Lincoln's face is a study—especially when lighted up. I have never seen a picture of him that does anything like justice to the original. He is a much better-looking man than any of the pic-

tures represent. I do not understand why people call him Old Abe. He displays no appearance of age except deeply indented wrinkles on his brow, and the furrow plowed down his bony cheeks. You hardly detect the presence of frost in his black, glossy hair."

Then the correspondent did a bold deed. He compared Lincoln's looks to those of two respectable Easterners, and gave Lincoln the best of it. "I do not understand why Mr. Lincoln is represented as being so prodigiously ugly. Put him alongside Mr. Charles O'Connor and Mr. James W. Gerard—both of which eminent gentlemen have ridiculed so much his supposed ugliness —and if he would not appear 'as Adonis to a satyr,' he would at all events be set down as the finest-looking man of the trio. He affects not the elegancies of refined society, does not care to imitate New York aldermen in the matter of yellow kids, but is altogether a plain, blunt, unostentatious man . . . In all of the photographs, his face wears a stony, rigid, corpselike expression, as if they were taken from a piece of sculpture, whereas in conversation he has great mobility and play of features. When he is thus animated, you fail to perceive anything ugly or grotesque about him."

The photographer, Hessler, came one day from Chicago. Politicians there were saying Lincoln seemed to be in "rough everyday rig" in all his pictures. Lincoln had written he would be "dressed up" if Hessler came to Springfield. And Hessler made four negatives of Lincoln in a stiff-bosomed, pleated shirt with pearl buttons. The glister of the shirt was the equal of any in a Douglas photograph, which was what the politicians were demanding.

Volk, the sculptor, arrived one day, was given a rose bouquet by Mrs. Lincoln, and presented her with a bust of her husband. As Lincoln shook him by the two hands, Volk said, "Now that you will doubtless be the next President of the United States, I want to make a statue of you, and shall do my best to do you justice." "I don't doubt it," replied Lincoln, "for I have come to the conclusion that you are an honest man."

A round stick was to be held in Lincoln's hands while Volk made casts of the hands. Lincoln stepped out to the woodshed and returned to the dining-room, whittling a broom handle. The edges didn't need such careful whittling, Volk remarked. "Oh, well, I thought I would like to have it nice."

After sittings, as the likeness emerged from the clay, Lincoln said, "There's the animal himself."

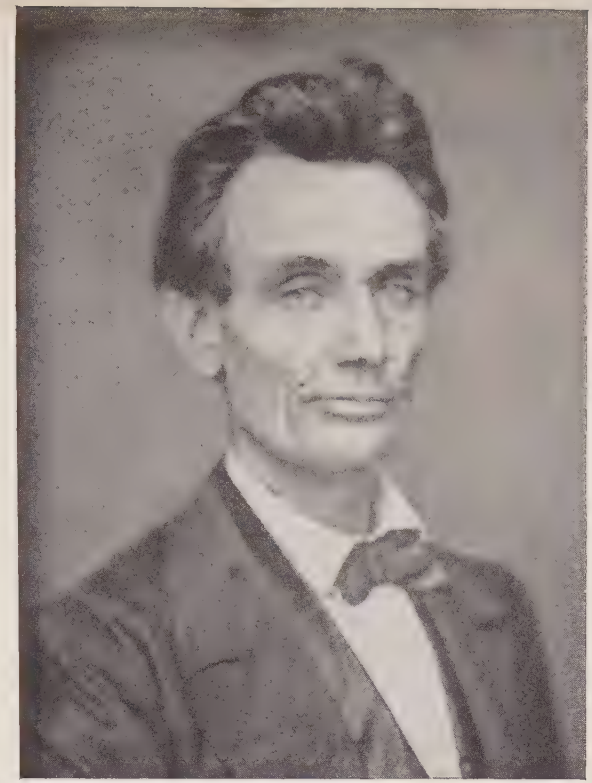
Portrait painters arrived with introductions and recommendations. One of them, Alban Jasper Conant, was secretary of the Western Academy of Art in St. Louis, which was to hold an exhibit at the coming Agricultural and Mechanical Association Fair in St. Louis, when the Prince of Wales and his suite were to be present. Conant's notion to paint Lincoln was given him by the Honorable William MacPherson, who had said in his quick way one day, "You'd better jump on a train and go paint this man Lincoln."

The new leader of the Republican party must be painted for the Fair. MacPherson said so; he was a St. Louis financial operator, builder and promoter in high favor with Morgan, Drexel & Co. of New York. MacPherson had founded Bellefontaine Cemetery and had other paying enterprises in mind, among them the Missouri Pacific Railroad. He had told Conant he was a Unionist and favored Lincoln, and a portrait would help the campaign.

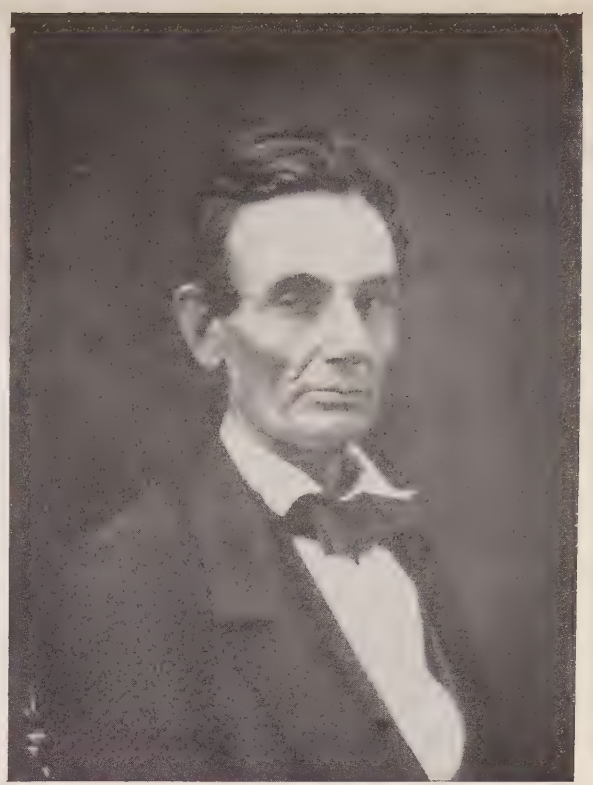
"Whenever MacPherson tells people they ought to sit to me, they sit," Conant told himself, and he went to Springfield.

Lincoln read the introductions and recommendations given Conant by MacPherson, and shook his head, "No, it is impossible for me to give any more sittings." Another portrait painter edged in, "Mr. Lincoln, you can give him my sitting for tomorrow."

And Lincoln said he could sit for two as well as one, and at ten o'clock the next morning, after dictating letters to Nicolay, and leaning on his left hand while its fingers rumpled his hair, he stood up, crossed the room, threw himself into a chair, crossed



Lincoln in 1860 at the time of nomination for President. From an ambrotype by William Church, Springfield, May 20, 1860.



Photograph of Lincoln at time of his last speech in Springfield in the campaign of 1858, attributed to Alexander Hessler.

Photographs from Frederick H. Meserve Collection

The Lincoln home in Springfield, Illinois, one afternoon of the 1860 campaign. Lincoln in a white coat stands at the right of the doorway. His speech was chiefly, "Please let me keep silence."

Photograph from author's collection

his legs, and, with a sigh, was ready for the portrait painters who had easels and palettes waiting.

Conant stood dumb. Accustomed as he was to pleasant faces, he saw before him what he read to be impenetrable abstraction, sinister cross tracks of melancholy and despair. Having come to paint a meadow of contented cows and a satisfied farmer, he was unprepared for a scarred eagle flying in a black night along over a range of volcanic mountain-tops.

"Something had to be done," Conant said afterward. "And I began by asking permission to arrange his hair, which stood out like an oven broom. He nodded, and with my fingers I brushed it back, disclosing the splendid lines of the forehead. At least that was something, I thought, as I backed away. But it was not enough. All the other features seemed to me hopeless, as I stood there. His ill repute in my section flooded into my mind; his common origin—born of Kentucky 'poor white trash'; his plebeian pursuits, his coarse tastes and low associates. He seemed to me, indeed, the story-telling, whisky-drinking, whisky-selling country grocer who, they said, had been exalted to the exclusion of the astute Seward."

Thus Conant, the snob, told it. But he was not all snob. He told more. "As I sat down again before my easel, I made some flippant remark calculated to appeal to the vulgarian. It was then I got my first hint of the innate dignity of the man. He made some monosyllabic reply, and there came over his face the most marvelously complex expression I have ever seen—a mingling of instant shrewd apprehension of the whole attitude of mind back of my remark, pained disappointment of my misunderstanding of him, and patient tolerance of him. In a flash, I saw I had made a mistake." Thus Conant the artist, who learned that by asking intelligent questions he could light up a mobile face he was trying to paint.

When a barefoot boy stole on tiptoe to peep into the room and see a Famous Candidate, Lincoln joked the boy and called him to come and shake hands. Two boys came in one afternoon as

he sat for the painter. "What's your name?" Lincoln asked the first one. "Folks," was the answer. "Well, that's wrong. Don't you see that you are only one, and folks means more than one? Tell your father I say your name should be Folk. Good-by," and a handshake and a pat on the head. The second ragtag said his name was Knotts, and Lincoln laughed: "Well, if here isn't another mistake. Don't you see that you are only one and knots means more than one? Tell your father I said your name should be Knott. Good-by," and a handshake and a pat on the head.

Then his own boy, Tad, came in, with a playmate, Jim. Tad found an unfinished portrait of his father and yelled, "Come here, Jim, here's another Old Abe." Lincoln laughed to the painter: "Did you hear that, Conant? He got that on the street, I suppose."

Lincoln was thankful to Conant for one thing—the Slow Horse story. After he heard it, he told it to other people, and when introducing Conant he would say, "Did you know that I am indebted to this man for the Slow Horse story?"

A politician went to a livery stable, the story ran, for a horse to drive sixteen miles to a convention where he wanted the nomination for county judge. The horse broke down, he arrived late, lost the nomination, and came back to the livery stable feeling it was useless to be angry. He said to the liveryman: "See here, Jones. You are training this horse for the New York market. You expect to sell him for a good price to an undertaker for a hearse horse." But Jones insisted the horse was one of the best in his stable. "Now don't deny it," said the politician, "for I know by his gait that you have spent a great deal of time training him to go before a hearse. But he will never do. He—is—so—slow—he couldn't get a corpse to the cemetery in time for the resurrection."

This story stayed as a favorite with Lincoln. Conant heard him tell it, and said he embellished it. "I believe Mr. Lincoln's mind took in the whole picture in all its details—the grave, dissipated candidate, the horse moving on through the ages with the corpse, yet at a gait so slow that the end of all things comes

to pass while he is still on the journey, and the corpse arrives too late for the resurrection."

Conant heard Lincoln tell stories which he said could never be printed; as with Villard they made him uneasy; he blamed them on pioneer conditions, influences far more "debasing" to the minds of the young than those in a large city. "Those born and bred in a remote country village, or reared on a farm with the hired help, will know what I mean. Those things stuck to him like a scar."

Conant believed he could see through and analyze what he called Lincoln's "humorous faculties." He noted of the stories he considered impure: "There was in them, to his mind, some striking touch of nature, emphasized by gross absurdity, of such point and power as to elevate it above the level of vulgarity. Such seeming blemishes were only the barnacles."

When the Conant portrait was finished, Mrs. Lincoln was pleased. "That is the way he looks when he has his friends about him."

And Conant was ready to go back to St. Louis with the painting for the Fair; it had been a puzzling job for him. He preferred regular features and curves, smoothly balanced lines with no gargoyle twists, and he found Lincoln's features "irregular and angular—the line of the nose straight on one side, and slightly curved on the other; the lower lip on the right side fuller than on the left, as if swollen from a blow or the sting of an insect."

The forehead was the one feature Conant found to be "very beautiful and symmetrical." The jaw, chin, nose, mouth would have to be made over before he could find "beauty and symmetry" in them.

Conant had looked at but never seen certain cathedral gargoyles that hover marvelously between tears and laughter, with mingled intimations of the tragic and comic in one breath.

Conant could hardly understand the *New York Herald* man's saying, "Mr. Lincoln's face is a study—especially when lighted up."

Chapter 150

DOUGLAS was stumping the country; it seemed a losing fight; he went on, tireless; his friends were amazed at the way he wore out, went to bed, and came back to the fight again. He told a Boston crowd: "When you asked your representatives why the Pacific railroad had not been made, why the mail system had not been reformed and carried on with vigor, why you have no overland mail route to the Pacific, and no steam lines, you are told that the slavery question occupied the whole session. All great measures which affect the commercial interests, the shipping interests, the manufacturing interests, the industrial interests of the country, have been lost for want of time. There never will be time unless you banish forever the slavery question from the halls of Congress and remand it to the people of each State and Territory."

And he told a New York crowd: "If Lincoln should be elected, which God in his mercy forbid [a voice 'Amen' and laughter], he must be inaugurated according to the Constitution and the laws of the country. . . . Yet if the withdrawal of my name would tend to defeat Mr. Lincoln, I would this moment withdraw it."

Democrats of the southern wing of the party sent Jefferson Davis to dicker with Douglas; if all contenders would shake hands and join on one candidate they would sweep the election; Douglas said it couldn't be done; too many of his friends would go for Lincoln. Among business interests in the East Douglas was able to stir a fear of what would happen if Lincoln were elected and the country was split with civil war; trade would go to pieces.

"I think there will be the most extraordinary effort ever made to carry New York for Douglas," Lincoln wrote to Thurlow Weed. "You and all others who write me from your State think the effort can not succeed, and I hope you are right. Still it will require close watching." Replying to a Southerner, he wrote

of receiving many assurances from the South "that in no probable event will there be any very formidable effort to break up the Union." He hoped and believed, "The people of the South have too much of good sense and good temper to attempt the ruin of the government rather than see it administered as it was administered by the men who made it."

Again and again came letters—just precisely what would he do with slavery if elected? would he interfere? would it not be wise to say plainly he wouldn't interfere? One he answered, "Those who will not read or heed what I have already publicly said would not read or heed a repetition of it." He quoted, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." Replying to a pro-Douglas Louisville editor, he wrote, "For the good men of the South—and I regard the majority of them as such—I have no objection to repeat seventy and seven times. But I have bad men to deal with, both North and South; men who are eager for something new upon which to base new misrepresentations; men who would like to frighten me, or at least fix upon me the character of timidity and cowardice." What he would write would be seized on as an "awful coming down." The letter closed, "I intend keeping my eye upon these gentlemen, and to not unnecessarily put any weapon in their hands."

Dick Yates was telling of a pretty young bride who handed a bridegroom a thousand dollars the next morning after the wedding day. And the bridegroom told her, "Lizzie, I like you very much, but this thousand dollars don't set you back any." From this Yates went on, "If Lincoln has all the other qualifications of a statesman, it don't set him back any with us who know and love him, to know that he was once a poor, hard-working boy."

"We know Old Abe does not look very handsome and some of the papers say he is positively ugly." Yates was also saying on the stump, "Well, if all the ugly men in the United States vote for him, he will surely be elected."

A child in a New York town asked whether he had a daughter,

and why he didn't wear whiskers. His letter, saluting "My dear little Miss," told her: "I regret the necessity of saying I have no daughter. I have three sons—one seventeen, one nine, and

Vanity Fair sketches Lincoln and Buchanan.

one seven years of age. They, with their mother, constitute my whole family. As to the whiskers, having never worn any, do you not think people would call it a silly piece of affectation if I were to begin it now?"

He was a slow man in important decisions, slow at getting started; he hadn't shaped his decisions so that he could answer certain questions. He wrote Swett about a matter concerning Weed and others. The main point of his letter to Swett was in one sentence, "It can not have failed to strike you that these men ask for just the same thing—fairness and fairness only." But he ended the letter, "Burn this; not that there is anything wrong in it, but because it is best not to be known that I wrote at all." His nickname was "Honest Abe," but he believed that some things were better done, or could not be done at all, if he were so honestly open as to tell the world about it. In correcting his Cooper Union speech for campaign publication, he urged, "So far as it is intended merely to improve in grammar and elegance of composition, I am quite agreed; but I do not wish the sense changed, or modified, to a hair's breadth." His old-time favorite word, "responsibility," took on heavier color. He wrote to Trumbull: "Remembering that Peter denied his Lord with an oath, after most solemnly protesting that he never would, I will not swear I will make no committals; but I do think I will not."

Enemy newspapers raked up his past, claiming he had said Thomas Jefferson was a slaveholder who "brought his own children under the hammer, and made money of his debaucheries," particularizing that "a daughter of this vaunted champion of democracy was sold some years ago at public auction in New Orleans, and purchased by a society of gentlemen who wished to testify by her liberation their admiration of the statesman who 'dreamt of freedom in a slave's embrace.'"

This, Lincoln designated "a base forgery," which "my friends will be entirely safe in denouncing." The charge that he was a member of the Know-Nothing organization and had attended a branch in Quincy, he dismissed with an alibi telling exactly where he was at all hours when he was in Quincy on the only evening he was ever there during which a Know-Nothing meeting was held.

And pleasant communications came, among them a letter from

Nat Grigsby, a brother of the Aaron Grigsby who had married Lincoln's sister, Sarah. The string of personal associations aroused in Lincoln by the mention of a name, and his neighborly methods in personal appeal as a politician, glimmer in his reply to Nat Grigsby. He wrote: "There is now a Republican electoral ticket in Missouri, so that you can vote for me if your neighbors will let you. I would advise you not to get into any trouble about it. Give my kindest regards to your brother Charlie. Of our three families who removed from Indiana together, my father, Squire Hall, and John D. Johnston are dead, and all the rest of us are yet living. Of course the younger ones are grown up, marriages contracted and new ones born. I have three boys now, the eldest of which is seventeen years of age."

Likewise he replied to greetings from Dave Turnham, the constable at Gentryville who had loaned him before he was a voter "The Revised Laws of Indiana." He would like to visit again the old home and old friends. "I am indeed very glad to learn you are still living and well. I well remember when you and I last met, after a separation of fourteen years, at the crossroads voting-place in the fall of 1844. It is now sixteen years more and we are both no longer young men." Regrets had to be sent, as in a note to a committee:

GENTLEMEN:

Yours of the 8th inviting my attendance at your National Exhibition of Imported Blood and American Breeds of Horses, on the 4th, 5th, 6th & 7th days of September, at Springfield, Mass., was received in due course, and should have been answered sooner. For reasons not necessary to be mentioned, I am constrained to decline the honor which you so kindly tender me.

Your Obt. Servant . . .

When the convention committee informing him of his nomination called at the Eighth Street cottage, he soberly brought them a pitcher of cold water; these were to be the drinks. He loosened the too stiff dignity of the occasion by calling on a tall judge to stand up and measure height with him.

A story was passing in Springfield that an Englishman in town, on hearing of the nomination, burst out: "What! Abe Lincoln nominated for President of the United States? Can it be possible! A man that buys a ten-cent beefsteak for his breakfast and carries it home himself!" And newsboys selling papers with a picture of Lincoln with his hair tousled had cried, "Here's your Old Abe, he'll look better when he gets his hair combed."

Reporters from enemy newspapers enjoyed him; one wrote: "The good-humored expression that lurks about his clear gray eye, traveling the one long, deep, curved furrow down his cheek, and making its home somewhere in the region of his capacious mouth, must always gain him friends. He dresses in the style of western lawyers, black cloth swallowtail coat and trousers fitting tightly to his long, bony frame; the inevitable black satin vest, open low down, and displaying a broad field of shirt bosom, the collar turned down over a black silk neckerchief." The silver watch chain he wore was burnished with wear; he carried the same watch key for the same timepiece he carried when the Mexican War was commencing.

"I am annoyed some," Lincoln wrote to a national committeeman, about a story in the *New York Herald* declaring that he had suspected in an invitation to visit Kentucky a trap to lynch him. Lincoln tried to explain that he had "playfully" written a Kentuckian that it would be a pleasure to visit childhood scenes, "but would you not Lynch me?" After bothering with a long letter of explanation and getting the *New York Herald* to publish a formal correction of the story, Lincoln wrote the national committeeman again: "Do nothing further about it. Although it wrongs me, and annoys me some, I prefer letting it run its own course, to getting into the papers over my own name."

"They are now using money lavishly," Thurlow Weed wrote to Lincoln three days before election, saying increased funds had fallen to the chests of the fusion leaders. "Some of our friends are nervous. I feel confident, however, that the masses are with us." Money, also "cheating," would probably cut down the New York Republican vote. Upstate, "in cities and villages

their money will help them to several thousand votes, for unfortunately our state committee disbursed their funds too early, and, feeling quite safe, we have been sending money to New Jersey and Delaware that is now needed here." Oneida County would see a majority of 4,500 to 5,000, "unless the enemy buys us out." From 500 to 1,000 of the Oneida voters always went to the side with the most money on Election Day. "I fear that money against us will reduce the majority to 4,000."

Chapter 151

THE campaign was in its last week. Lincoln was in the Statehouse one day, alone with Newton Bateman, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. He and Bateman were friends and talkers. He had taken a letter once to Bateman, asking corrections in syntax and structure. "I never was very strong on grammar." Bateman's head came only a little above Lincoln's elbows. He was referred to as "Little Newt." Lincoln would introduce him, saying, "This is my little friend, the big schoolmaster of Illinois."

And Lincoln had a Springfield poll book with notes on how each citizen was going to vote. "I wish particularly to see how the ministers of Springfield are going to vote." They turned the leaves, added up results, and Lincoln said: "Here are twenty-three ministers of different denominations, and all of them are against me but three; and here are a great many prominent members of churches, a very large majority of whom are against me."

Then he paused, and after a while rose and walked up and down the room. Bateman saw tears fill his eyes as he stopped in his pacing to and fro, to say: "I know there is a God, and that He hates injustice and slavery. I see the storm coming, and I know that His hand is in it. If He has a place and work for me I believe I am ready. I am nothing but truth is everything."

And he went on in a lengthy and dark meditation on God and Christ, slavery and the teachings of the New Testament. "I may not see the end; but it will come, and I shall be vindicated; and these men will find they have not read their Bibles aright."

Suspicions were whispered, squabbles recited. In one case he advised: "I am slow to listen to criminations among friends, and never expose their quarrels on either side. My sincere wish is that both sides will allow bygones to be bygones, and look to the present and future only."

As the summer and fall drew on toward Election Day he was to those who met him the same friendly neighbor as always —but with more to think about. He shook hands with Whitney in a big crowd, and a half-hour later, seeing Whitney again, he shook hands and called him by name. "He didn't know me the first time," said Whitney.

Millions of people had by this time read his words of two years ago in the House Divided speech. They struck the soft, weird keynote of the hour. "If we could first know where we are, and whither we are drifting, we could better judge what to do and how to do it."

Twice, since he had first so spoken, the corn had grown from seed to the full stalk and been harvested.

In a book he had carried, it was told, "All rising to power is by a winding stair." As he went higher it was colder and lonelier.

The last leaves were blowing off the trees and the final geese honking south. Winter would come and go before seed corn went into the ground again.

Chapter 152

EARLY reports on the evening of Election Day, November 6, told Lincoln he hadn't won his home county of Sangamon. But he had carried his home precinct. From nine o'clock on he sat in the Springfield telegraph office. Lyman Trumbull arrived from

Alton and summarized reports. "We've got 'em, we've got 'em." Then came a telegram: "Hon. A. Lincoln: Pennsylvania 70,000 for you. New York safe. Glory enough. S. Cameron."

Lincoln and his friends stepped across the street to a room where the Republican ladies' club had fixed a lunch. The ladies rushed him. "How do you do, Mr. President?" When two ladies met in a corner one said, "I've shaken hands with him," and the other replied: "Have you? Well, I was at the head of the table when he came in, and had a shake there, and then ran around and took my place at the foot of the line and shook hands with him again."

Out in the streets, and up around the Statehouse, crowds surged, shouting, "New York 50,000 majority for Lincoln"; lines of men locked arms and sang, "Ain't I glad I joined the Republicans?" till they were hoarse. The jubilee was still going as Lincoln walked to the Eighth Street cottage and told a happy woman, "Mary, we're elected."

The count showed Lincoln winning with 1,856,452 votes, a majority of nearly a half-million over Douglas, the nearest contender. A change of a few votes here and there would have given a different decision. In a total of 4,700,000 votes the other combined candidates had nearly a million more votes than Lincoln. Fifteen states gave him no electoral votes; in ten states he didn't get a count of one popular vote. And the Congress would have a Democratic majority.

In the whole Northwest, Lincoln's majority was only 6,600 over all other candidates. A change of one vote in twenty would have given Douglas the Northwest, and sent the presidential election into the national House of Representatives, where the South would probably have won.

On the day after the election, Wendell Phillips stood before an evening audience in Tremont Temple, Boston, with one hand resting on a hip, never moving out of his foot-tracks for an hour or so, while there sprang from his lips a flow of commentary, a percussion of epigrams. He shook his audience to laughter with saying: "The saddest thing in the Union meetings of last

year was the constant presence, in all of them, of the clink of coin, the whir of spindles, the dust of trade. You would have imagined it was an insurrection of peddlers against honest men."

The incessant cry of "Silence!" from conservatives to agitators reminded Phillips of a sleepy crier in a New Hampshire court, who was often waking from dog-naps to shout, "Silence!" until one day the judge exclaimed, "Mr. Crier, you are the noisiest man in court, with your everlasting shout of 'Silence!'" He would say John Brown, Garrison, and the Abolitionists had so shaped politics that Lincoln, a mild antislavery man, could be elected President. But politics, the Government, wasn't so important. "To hear some men talk of the Government, you would suppose that Congress was the law of gravitation and kept the planets in their places. I think of that idle English nobleman at Florence whose brother, just arrived from London, happening to mention the House of Commons, he languidly asked, 'Ah! is that thing going still?'"

Phillips squeezed a mass of history into a little mouthful of speech. "First man walked, dug the earth with his hands, ate what he could pick up; then he subdues the horse, invents the plow and makes the water float him downstream; next come sails, windmills, and water power; then sewing machines lift woman out of torture, steam marries the continents, and the telegraph flashes news like sunlight over the globe." From this he would reason, "Every step made hands worth less, and brains worth more; and that is the death of slavery." The North and the South were like a tree trying to grow an apple one half pippin and the other half russet. "I am sure you cannot make a nation with one half steamboats, sewing machines, and Bibles, and the other half slaves."

With one hand resting on a hip, and never moving out of his foot-tracks, Phillips picked up facts, juggled and hoisted them. Forty years of industrial and mechanical revolution in transportation and machinery had brought changes worth trying to analyze. "The pulpit and the steamboat are of infinitely more moment than the Constitution. The South owes the existence of slavery

today to the cunning of a Massachusetts Yankee, Eli Whitney; and Fulton did more to perpetuate the Union than a Senate chamber of Websters. The founders and presidents of our railways are a much more influential body than the Senate of the Union." It had got so that the President of the United States didn't govern; he only reigned. "Did you ever see on Broadway a black figure grinding chocolate in the windows? He seems to turn the wheel, but in truth the wheel turns him."

Phillips said, "Let us question Mr. Lincoln," and went on: "Do you believe, Mr. Abraham Lincoln, that the negro is your political and social equal, or ought to be? Not a bit of it. Do you believe he should sit on juries? Never. Do you think he should vote? Certainly not. Do you think that, when the Declaration of Independence says, 'All men are created equal,' it intends the political equality of blacks and whites? No, sir. If this be equality, surely Mr. Lincoln's mind is as yet empty. But notwithstanding the emptiness of Mr. Lincoln's mind, I think we shall yet succeed in making this a decent land to live in."

And still with one hand resting on a hip, and never stirring out of his foot-tracks, he told them: "Pictures of the mere industrial value of the Union make me profoundly sad. Is this the whole fruit of ages of toil, sacrifice, and thought? Does it result only in a workshop—fops melted in baths and perfumes, and men grim with toil?" He would have a Christian civilization with a Holy of Holies. "Crowding to the shelter of its stately arches, I see old and young, learned and ignorant, rich and poor, native and foreign, pagan, Christian, and Jew, black and white, in one glad, harmonious, triumphant procession."

Thus events marched and masked their meanings, and educated men with intellects keen as steel tried to read the future in the smoky confusions of their logic, their habits, and their geographical locations. Facts were harder to see because they were gathering motion, whisking into new shapes and disguises every day. Dream-shapes of future events danced into sight and out of sight, faded and came again, before a whirligig of triple mirrors.

Chapter 153

EVENTS came as by clockwork at a signal and Lincoln's election was the signal. South Carolina legislators voted to raise and equip 10,000 volunteer soldiers; Georgia and Louisiana legislatures voted $1,000,000.00 and $500,000.00 for arms and troops. South Carolina through its legislature declared itself a sovereign and independent state and seceded from the Union of States, on December 20, with a flag of its own, with oaths of allegiance; forts, post offices, customhouses of the Federal Government were taken. Before New Year's Day it was known the whole row of cotton states would follow South Carolina, with a view of forming a Southern Confederacy. And in the same weeks, for whatever it portended, there was also the accomplished fact that a great chain of railroads, making a complete rail transportation line from Bangor, Maine, to New Orleans, had been finished.

A crisscross of facts was operating. Robert Toombs was saying: "It is admitted that you seek to outlaw $4,000,000,000 of property of our people in the Territories. Is not that a cause of war?" But was secession the safest way of managing this property? Jefferson Davis had his doubts. And Alexander Stephens had written five months before, "I consider slavery much more secure in the Union than out of it if our people were but wise." Property suffers in revolutions, he pointed out. "The institution is based on conservatism." Stephens had noted the diminishing supply of slave labor and wrote his belief that, without fresh supplies from Africa, slavery would be replaced by free competitive wage labor.

Among the fire-eaters clamoring for secession were those who made a business of buying, breeding, selling slaves. A planter from Georgia had told the national Democratic convention, "I have had to pay from $1,000 to $2,000 a head when I could go to Africa and buy better negroes for $50 apiece."

On the tax list of the city of Charleston for that year were the names of 132 "colored people" who paid taxes on 390 slaves

which they owned; the class included eleven Indian families who had consorted with negroes.

Secession was the creed of state sovereignty, the belief that any state could draw out of the Union and stand by itself in a separate existence, when it chose so to do. John C. Calhoun and other figures of austere life and heroic proportions had taught this with a logic that to Southerners seemed inexorable and unconquerable. Yet the fact must be recorded, with this, that Davis, Stephens, and other high counselors of the South, in their letters and speeches at this time, did not advise secession. The leaders were Yancey, Rhett, and others. They cried, "The irrepressible conflict is about to be visited upon us through the Black Republican, Lincoln, and his fanatical, diabolical Republican party."

Once secession was accomplished by its radical manipulators, Southerners till then conservative, and advising against disunion, fell in line as patriots whose first oath of allegiance was to their sovereign state, their country. They quoted Decatur: "Our Country! In her intercourse with foreign nations may she always be in the right; but our country, right or wrong." And the *Charleston Mercury* published dispatches from northern cities under the heading, "Foreign News."

Those who demurred, reasoned, and lifted friendly warnings against disunion and secession were many, but their effort was useless against the onrush of those who took Lincoln's election as the signal for a time of change. There were those who looked on Lincoln as Alexander Stephens did in a letter to J. Henly Smith, a fellow Georgian, before the election, saying: "What is to become of the country in case of Lincoln's election, I do not know. As at present advised I should not be for disunion on the grounds of his election. It may be that his election will be attended with events that will change my present opinion, but his bare election would not be sufficient cause in my judgment to warrant a disruption—particularly as his election will be the result if it occurs at all of the folly and madness of our own people. If they do these things in the green tree what will they

not do in the dry? If, without cause, they destroy the present Government, the best in the world, what hopes have I that they would not bring untold hardships upon the people in their efforts to give us one of their own modeling? Let events shape their own course. In point of merit as a man I have no doubt Lincoln is just as good, safe and sound a man as Buchanan and would administer the Government so far as he is individually concerned just as safely for the South and as honestly and faithfully in every particular. I know the man well. He is not a bad man. He will make as good a President as Fillmore did and better, in my opinion. He has a great deal of practical common sense. Still, his party may do mischief. If so it will be a great misfortune, but a misfortune that our own people brought upon us . . . We have nothing to fear from anything so much as unnecessary changes and revolutions in government . . . I shall vote for Douglas."

The "green tree" grew. One by one the six other cotton states of the lower South joined South Carolina in leaving the Union and declaring their right to self-government and self-determination. Their delegates at Montgomery, Alabama, on February 4, organized a provisional government named The Confederate States of America, electing Jefferson Davis of Mississippi as President and Alexander Stephens of Georgia as Vice President. Conventions in North Carolina and Arkansas deliberated, and joined the Confederacy. In Tennessee the voters balloted 105,000 to 47,000 in favor of secession, the Union strength coming from the mountaineers. In Virginia, three to one of 130,000 voters were in favor of "The Mother of Presidents" going into the Confederacy, the mountaineers chiefly being Unionist. In Texas, Governor Sam Houston refused to call the legislature and tried to stop secession, but was bowled over.

Arsenals, supplies, post offices, ships were taken over by the new government; fort guns fired on a ship at sea; President Buchanan proclaimed a Fast Day publicly, and moaned privately that he was the last President of the United States of America; well-meaning men of splendid intentions and large hearts sprang

forward with compromises and arrangements and suggestions; special committees and conferences of duly appointed delegates met, spoke, adjourned. Southern congressmen resigned and left Washington; there were votes enough one January day to admit "Bleeding Kansas" as a state in the Union, her officially embossed motto and slogan being, as translated from the Latin, "To the Stars by Hard Ways."

At the opening session of Congress, the chaplain had prayed: "O Lord our God, we offer to Thee our humble praise for the past, the present, and for all the future. Will it please Thee, for Christ's sake, to grant us Thy special aid? Thou knowest that our good men are at fault, and that our wise men are at fault; in the North and the South, in the East and in the West, they are at fault."

While Southern radicals were calling Lincoln a fanatical, diabolical Abolitionist, Wendell Phillips sneered at him as "the slave hound of Illinois." Robert Toombs read to the Georgia legislature a defense of secession written and published by Horace Greeley; the advice of Greeley was, "Let the erring sisters depart in peace." Boston heard Phillips declare: "Let the South march off, with flags and trumpets, and we will speed the parting guest. Let her not stand upon the order of her going, but go at once. Give her forts, arsenals, and subtreasuries. Give her jewels of silver and gold, and rejoice that she has departed. All hail, disunion!"

Thirty years ago, southern leaders, sixteen years ago, northern Abolitionists, announced their purpose to seek the dissolution of the Union, said Phillips. He jubilated, "Who dreamed that success would come so soon?" He paid a compliment to South Carolina, with a backhand slap at New England. "South Carolina, bankrupt, alone, with a hundred thousand more slaves than whites, four blacks to three whites within her borders, flings her gauntlet at the feet of twenty-five millions of people in defense of an idea, to maintain what she thinks her right. I would New England could count one state so fearless among her six."

This in January, while in February Phillips said disunion would

be good business, declaring, "The South buys little of us and pays for only about half she gets." If the southern states put forts on the Mississippi River to bar trade, "they will graciously be allowed to pay for them, while northern railroads grow rich carrying behind steam that portion of wheat, bacon, silk, tea which would otherwise float" toward the Gulf.

Wendell Phillips welcomed disunion. "Let the border states go. Then we part friends. The Union thus ended, the South no longer hates the North. . . . The laws of trade will bind us together, as they do all other lands."

The Detroit department-store proprietor, Zachariah Chandler, senator from Michigan, a square-jawed physical bulwark, wrote his state governor "a little bloodletting" was wanted, which was matched with a Georgian's saying the people must wake up; there was a way to rouse them and get the war going: "Sprinkle blood in their faces."

Chapter 154

In the day's mail for Lincoln came letters cursing him for an ape and a baboon who had brought the country evil. Also letters told him he was a satyr, a negro, a mulatto, a buffoon, a monster, an abortion, an idiot; he would be flogged, burned, hanged, hampered, tortured.

Pen sketches of gallows and daggers arrived from "oath-bound brotherhoods." Some notes were scrawled with misspelled words, barking to intimidate. A one-page missive of ten lines employed the word "goddam" from one to three times in each line. Other letters were specific in statements that a rifle-shot would reach him before he reached Washington or the ceremony of inauguration as President. Some aimed at a polite and accomplished raillery. One postmarked, "Elgin, Ill., Nov. 21, 1860," read:

Deformed Sir, The Ugly Club, in full meeting, have elected you an Honorary Member of the Hard-Favored Fraternity.—Prince Harry was lean, Falstaff was fat, Thersites was hunchbacked, and Slawkenbergus

was renowned for the eminent miscalculation which Nature had made in the length of his nose; but it remained for you to unite all species of deformity, and stand forth the Prince of Ugly Fellows. In the bonds of Ugliness—Hinchaway Beeswax, President. Eagle-Eyed Carbuncle, Secretary of the Ugly Club.

A man calling to shake hands with Lincoln one day said it was too bad that as soon as the high honor of being President had been bestowed on Lincoln he should have to deal immediately with "the vexatious slavery question." Lincoln told a story, which the *New York Herald* writer heard. "He said that many years ago an unsophisticated farmer, more honest than learned, commonly known as 'Old Zach' undertook to run for the office of Justice of the Peace in Kentucky. Being successful, the first case he was called upon to adjudicate was a criminal process for the abuse of negro slaves. Its merits being somewhat beyond his comprehension, after hearing the evidence he sought enlightenment in the Statutes of the Commonwealth and various 'handbooks for justices of the peace' with which he had provided himself on assuming the ermine. But his search for precedents proved in vain, and, growing still more puzzled, he exclaimed at last angrily, 'I will be damned if I don't feel almost sorry for being elected when the niggers is the first thing I have to attend to.' The story was, of course, intended more as a humorous reply than as an indication of Mr. Lincoln's own sentiments."

Often he took his boy Tad on his knees, and they talked. He could tell Tad many a piece of nonsense with a monkeyshine in it that would have been wasted on Horace Greeley or Salmon P. Chase. Tad came into an important conference once and in a loud whisper told his father, "Ma says come to supper." A slow smile spread over the father's face, as he said, "You have all heard, gentlemen, the announcement concerning the interesting state of things in the dining-room. It will never do for me, if elected, to make this young man a member of my Cabinet, for it is plain he cannot be trusted with secrets of state."

Chapter 155

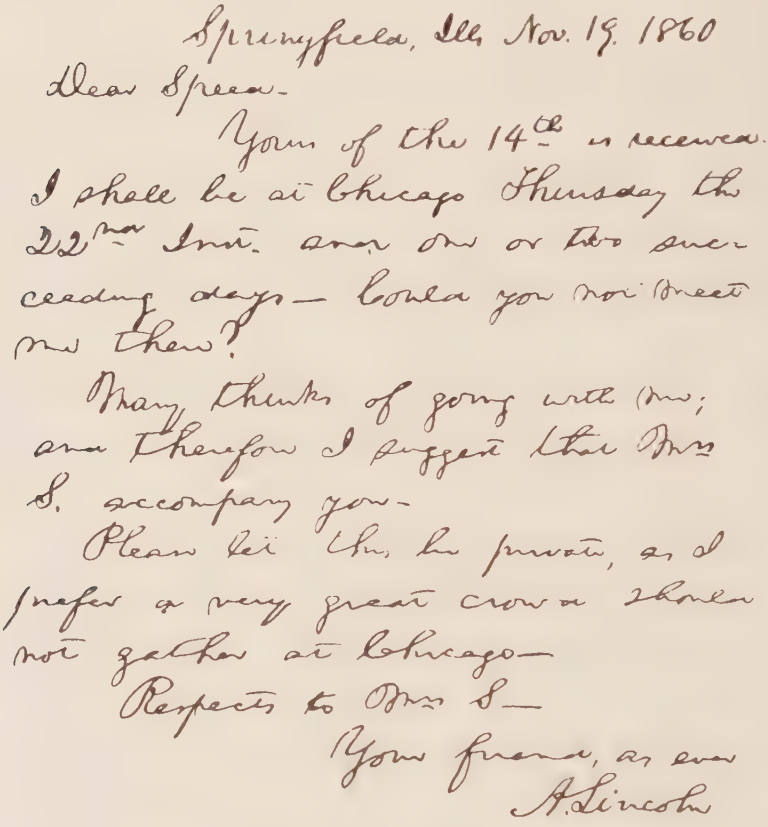
As the country drifted and the muddle got worse, Lincoln had nothing to say. He delivered remarks such as, "Please excuse me from making a speech," and, "Let us at all times remember that all American citizens are brothers of a common country." He indicated he would stand for no further spread of slavery. And his close friend, Edward D. Baker, now senator from Oregon, told the United States Senate that Lincoln would respect the Fugitive Slave Law. Also, he told friends privately that the forts seized by the seceded states would have to be retaken. But as to declaration of policy on this and that, he was waiting. Those pushing him could have satisfaction later.

Newspapers twisted and misrepresented a Trumbull speech and he wrote to Henry J. Raymond of the *New York Times:* "This is just as I expected, and what would happen with any declaration I could make. These political fiends are not half sick enough yet. Party malice and not public good possesses them. 'They seek a sign, and no sign shall be given them.'"

The little financial panic and depressed business tone said to have been brought on by interests hostile to the coming administration, he dismissed with, "Nothing is to be gained by fawning around the 'respectable scoundrels' who got it up." Every once in a while he seemed to use the phrase "respectable scoundrels," and sometimes an unprintable word in place of "scoundrels."

An Indiana man, James P. Lusk, came from a talk with Lincoln, remarking, "He said he had as much curiosity to know what kind of a pronouncement the South wanted and wished, as the South had to know what kind he would make, if he made one at all." A declaration that he wasn't going to interfere with slavery would do no good, he wrote to Jesse K. Dubois. "I should have no objection to make and repeat the declaration a thousand times, if there were no danger of encouraging bold, bad men to believe they are dealing with one who can be scared

into anything." He wrote to Trumbull that "Pop. Sov." was "the dangerous ground into which our friends have a hankering to run." His advice would be: "Have none of it. Stand firm.



Springfield, Ills Nov. 19. 1860

Dear Speed.

Yours of the 14th is received. I shall be at Chicago Thursday the 22nd Inst. and on one or two succeeding days— could you not meet me then?

Mary thinks of going with me; and therefore I suggest that Mrs S. accompany you.

Please let this be private, as I prefer a very great crow to shall not gather at Chicago—

Respects to Mrs S—

Your friend, as ever

A. Lincoln

Lincoln writes to his old crony, Joshua Speed.

From the Barrett Collection.

The tug has got to come; and better now than any time hereafter."

Once more Lincoln and Joshua Speed were exchanging letters. Lincoln hoped he and Speed could meet in Chicago, each with his wife. "Could you not meet me there?" he wrote. "Mary thinks of going with me; and therefore I suggest that Mrs. S.

accompany you. Please let this be private, as I prefer a very great crowd should not gather at Chicago."

He went to Chicago, met Hannibal Hamlin, the Vice President elect; they held a reception in the Tremont House, went to St. James's Church together, and in the afternoon, as the *Tribune* reported it, "They visited the North Market Mission where, after the usual services, the President-elect delivered a short address which was received with much pleasure by the destitute children attending the Sabbath school."

Eight little girls stood in a row at the Tremont House; he signed his name in their autograph albums. A four-year-old boy yelled, "Hurray for Uncle Abe!" and was soon in Lincoln's hands getting tossed high toward the ceiling and hugged safe on coming down. He had a good visit with Joshua Speed, asked many questions about Kentucky. Mrs. Lincoln and Mrs. Speed went shopping.

The Lincolns went back to Springfield. Tad and Willie were singing, "Old Abe Lincoln came out of the wilderness." He resumed regular hours of ten to twelve in the morning and 3:30 to 5:30 in the afternoon, receiving visitors in the governor's room of the State House.

William Jones dropped in; he was the Jones who kept the store in Gentryville when the boy, Abe, was "the big buck of the lick." An old man from the state of Mississippi came out after his talk with Lincoln and stood at a wall, in tears; men asked the trouble; he wished more people in the South could know Lincoln. A man from the state of Alabama had a half-hour talk; what he got was jokes and illustrations, and little satisfaction.

Mark Delahay showed up, the Kansas politician whose expenses Lincoln had paid to the Chicago convention. Delahay visited the Lincoln home and scrutinized a silk banner on the parlor wall; it had been embroidered by the young ladies of Lombard College, and when they presented it Lincoln had told them, "I shall prize it." As Delahay was feeling of the banner to see if it was real silk, Lincoln remarked, "You seem to like that banner." "I do; it is a beautiful thing." "Well, I will

make you a present of it." And it traveled with Delahay toward Topeka.

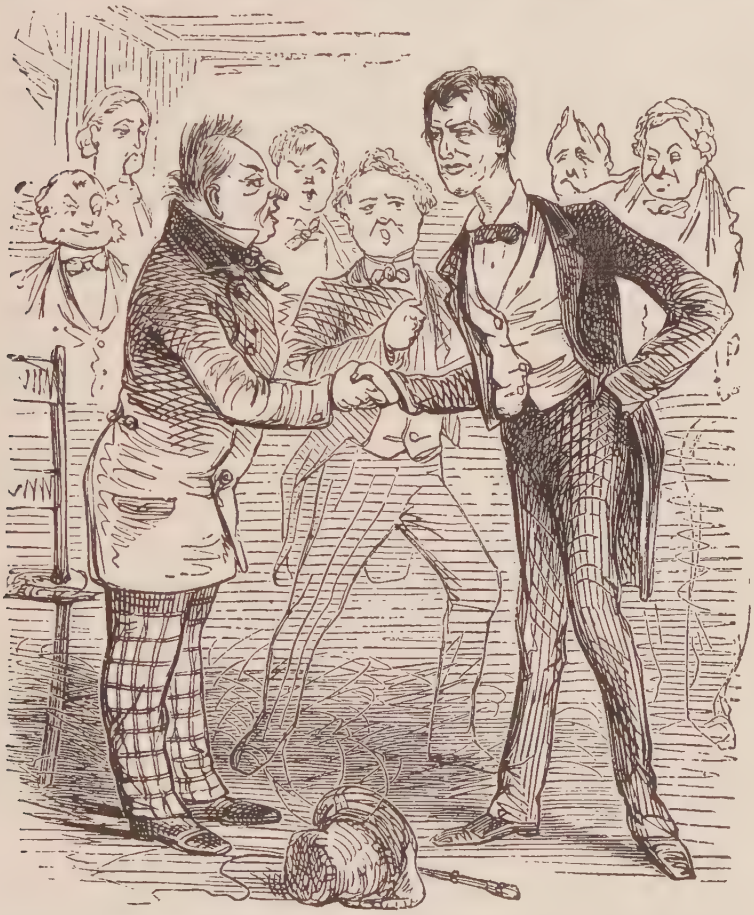
One political friend of twenty years' loyalty, a prospering Alton Railroad lawyer, sobbed a prayer to Lincoln to address the South and promise no war. "I live near the Missouri line; I'll be one of the first killed. Don't make a rumpus." And the man, Lincoln told Whitney, was "sobbing like a child."

The trains into Springfield unloaded hundreds of passengers on a single day, arriving to see Lincoln. Some carried shining faces; they just wanted to look at him and tell him they hoped to God he'd live and have good luck. Others, too, carried shining faces, singing, "Ain't we glad we joined the Republicans?" They said they nominated and elected him President, and inquired about post offices, revenue collectorships, clerkships, secretaryships. They wore him. Behind their smiles some had snouts like buzzards, pigs, rats. They were pap-seekers, sapsuckers, chair-warmers, hammock heroes, the office-sniffing mob who had killed Zach Taylor, who had killed Tippecanoe Harrison. They wore Lincoln—worse than the signs of war.

A joker arose, with a far sardonic snort in his jokes. He and Lincoln struck hands of fellowship. In an article in *Vanity Fair,* this joker reported with a horselaugh the tragic swarming to the trough at Springfield. "Hevin no politics, I made bold to visit Old Abe at his humsted in Springfield. I found the old feller in his parler, surrounded by a perfick sworm of orfice seekers. Sum wanted post offices, sum wanted collectorships, sum wanted furrin missions and all wanted sumthin. I thought Old Abe would go crazy. He hadn't more than had time to shake hands with 'em, before another tremenjis crowd cum porein onto his premises. The house, dooryard, barn & woodshed was all full, and when another crowd cum I told 'em not to go away for want of room, as the hog-pen was still empty.

"One patrit from a small town in Mishygan went up on top the house, got into the chimney and slid down into the parler, where Old Abe was endeverin to keep the hungry pack of offiss-seekers from chawin him up alive without benefit of clergy.

'Good God!' cried Old Abe, 'they cum upon me from the skize —down the chimneys and from the bowels of the yearth!' He hadn't more'n got them words out of his delikit mouth before



Vanity Fair sketches Lincoln at home meeting the office-seekers.

two fat offiss-seekers from Wisconsin, in endeverin to crawl atween his legs for the purpose of applyin for the tollgateship of Milwawky, upsot the President eleck & he would hev gone sprawlin into the fire place if I hadn't caught him in these arms."

It was the beginning of a friendship. The writer signed as "Artemus Ward," a twenty-six-year-old wanderer born in Maine, trained on newspapers in Cleveland, Ohio, and doing one sketch a week for *Vanity Fair*. Lincoln adopted him as an unofficial spokesman who could be depended on to say things a Chief Magistrate would like to say if it wouldn't be going too far. Democracy should see and laugh. A republic should have jesters at the overstuffed shirts of dignity and pretense, such as this A. Ward.

The *Vanity Fair* sketch of the office seekers closed with, "He shook me cordyully by the hand—we exchanged picters, so we could gaze upon each other's liniments when far away from one another." This pleased Lincoln. He read such passages aloud to other people and chuckled over them.

One caller told him of a set of schemes to stop any possible war by a big wheat speculation that would make them both rich. It reminded Lincoln of the merchant who told the same sort of crank, "My advice is that you stick to your business." Then came the query, "But what is my business?" and the reply, "I don't know, but whatever it is you stick to it."

Another caller, an old woman, he greeted: "Now, Aunt Sally, this is real kind of you to come and see me. How are you, and how's Jake? Come over here." And he took her to a group of officials and political workers. "Gentlemen, this is a good old friend of mine. She can make the best flapjacks you ever tasted, and she's baked 'em for me many a time." And the old woman handed him a large pair of yarn socks, saying, "Knit 'em myself."

And Ned Baker came in, brave, warm, impetuous, extravagant, song-voiced. Lincoln had named his boy Eddie, the one who died, after Edward D. Baker, who had become United States senator from Oregon. They talked of the future and of the past. They could recall the story told twenty years before by Lincoln, to tease Baker. The story ran that Baker, who was born on the ocean, from English parents, was found sobbing alone in a timber one morning, and when asked what was the matter had

answered that he had just read in a book that only citizens born in the United States could ever become President—and his chance was gone!

Chapter 156

THE Washington man of the *Chicago Tribune* wired on January 3 that President Buchanan had met with his Cabinet the day before, and, "The row recommenced. The President, like a pusillanimous coward, refused to take sides, and, shaken like an aspen leaf, entreated them not to quarrel, and offered them some old whisky—his unfailing remedy. The old man has become little better than a sot. He keeps saturated with Monongahela whisky. He drinks to drown remorse and stupefy his brain as he staggers along with the treasonable gang who have possession of him."

The next day was the one set apart by the President for fasting, prayer, and humiliation. Services were conducted in nearly all churches in the northern states. The Springfield man of the *Chicago Tribune* wired to his paper, "Mr. Lincoln attended church today, in obedience to the Presidential proclamation, and it is to be presumed that in his prayers Mr. Buchanan's backbone was not forgotten."

At that hour, as Lincoln was in church at fast-day services, many people believed southern forces would seize Washington, and Lincoln would have to be sworn in at some other place. Twenty-two carloads of troops were starting from Fort Leavenworth across Missouri for Baltimore. Cameron of Pennsylvania was saying, "Lincoln, if living, will take the oath of office on the Capitol steps." Newly organized artillery companies were drilling in Chicago. A thousand negro slaves were throwing up fortifications in Charleston, South Carolina. The Democrats of Illinois were ready for semi-secessionist action at their state convention that month. The governor of Illinois was writing in his message to the legislature, "Illinois counts among her citi-

zens 400,000 who can bear arms." The Wisconsin governor was writing, "Secession is revolution; revolution is war." The governor of Massachusetts was writing that the words of Andrew Jackson of Tennessee were precious, "The Federal Union—may it be preserved!" Republican newspapers were printing the last will and testament of Jackson with his curse on "foreign foes" and "intestine traitors." Five million dollars and a hundred thousand troops would be offered by their legislature, Pennsylvania legislators were saying. "Mr. Lincoln may take his oath before any officer in the country authorized to administer an oath," the *Chicago Tribune* had said just the day before. "We have no doubt that Mr. Lincoln will be President of the United States and Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, before he leaves Springfield."

"The Revolution" was the top headline under which a New York daily paper assembled the news of the country. Nine columns were required on one day to report declarations of southern conventions, and resignations from the army and navy and the training academies. A letter of Edward Everett, the classical orator, was read to a Boston mass meeting. He was saying, "To hold fifteen States in the Union by force is preposterous."

With the Union broken Stephens of Georgia could see "anarchy" at the North, "and whether we shall be better off at the South will depend on many things I am not satisfied we have any assurance of." Stephens had dug into history. "Revolutions are much easier started than controlled, and the men who begin them, even for the best purposes and object, seldom end them."

Horace Greeley dropped into Springfield, going home from a trip West. He didn't go to Lincoln's house. Lincoln walked to Greeley's hotel. Greeley was cautious, tentative, bewildered, outwardly thinking in straight lines, inwardly running circles. His original advice to "let the erring sisters depart in peace" had changed to counsel against compromise. The two men talked several hours. Lincoln knew what a wide audience of readers

Greeley had through the *New York Tribune,* and was trying to join forces with him. Greeley wanted to be senator from New York. He could use Lincoln's influence. Lincoln held off from taking a hand in New York state politics. He had written to Weed, Greeley's mortal enemy, politically, the day before, "My name must not be used in the senatorial election in favor of or against any one."

They parted—Greeley and Lincoln—with no fresh understanding of each other, no real arrangement to coöperate. Lincoln, in Greeley's eyes, was just one more common politician. In all of their hours of talk, said Greeley, "I never heard him tell a story or anecdote." The clue was sinister. But Greeley didn't know it. He believed Lincoln wanted to be charioteer of the Greeley chariot, which Lincoln didn't want at all. Lincoln wanted less zigzag driving.

Politicians swarmed in and overran Springfield. "The influx is so great that a large number nightly seek shelter in sleeping-cars," said a newspaper.

Lincoln had lost forty pounds' weight in less than a year, so Volk said Lincoln told him. "He looks more pale and careworn," said the *New York Herald* writer. "The groveling tide-waiters, fawners, sycophants, and parasites combined in the genus 'office seekers' have thus far affected him only in slight degree. . . . His ears and eyes must learn to be closed at certain times. His lips must be trained to less ready response. If not, the crowd of cormorants and place hunters will unbalance and overwhelm him."

He took a stand against Illinois sending commissioners to a peace convention called by the Governor of Virginia. Dr. William Jayne wrote to Trumbull, "Lincoln advised he would rather be hanged by the neck till he was dead on the steps of the Capitol than buy or beg a peaceful inauguration."

Day by day called for decisions. And Lincoln had no policy, as such, to guide him. He explained to a secretary, "My policy is to have no policy."

On the horizons seemed to be looming an ancient tribal Dance

of Death. Men had come to the point where they wanted something done so that it would stay done, and they were acting by the theory of Emerson's neighbor with the wheelbarrow, who had said he wouldn't bother with voting at town meeting, and, "What you do with a gun will stay so."

The teachings of hate became fiercer in key. Proud and powerful men, reckless as to death and personal belongings and public peace, hunted through language and lingo to find epithets, dirty names to call the Other Side. All revolutions or wars must have their Dirty Names to begin with and to carry on. Lincoln had decided that in his First Inaugural Address he would call the southern people "My Dissatisfied Countrymen." Those not his countrymen, at least, were dissatisfied. It sort of smiled through a face of tears, that salutation, "My Dissatisfied Countrymen."

Chapter 157

Thurlow Weed, the New York boss, got off the train at Springfield. He came from Albany, where letters had kept coming from Swett, saying Lincoln wanted to see him about Cabinet matters. They talked politics and issues in general. Lincoln said he had been looking around for helpers, for great men. Perhaps he didn't know where the best available timber was. "While the population of the country has immensely increased, really great men are scarcer than they used to be."

Lincoln suggested that Weed was a Cabinetmaker, and while he, Lincoln, had never learned that trade, he had a job of Cabinetmaking on hand and was willing to have the help of friends. Weed came back saying he wasn't exactly a boss Cabinetmaker; he was a journeyman, had helped make state cabinets but not Federal. The two men had a good time.

Weed thought it marvelous that Lincoln all the time kept interspersing stories pat to the deal in hand. Weed believed two members of the Cabinet should be from slave states. "Would

you rely on such men if their states secede?" "Yes, sir; the men I have in my mind can always be relied on." "Well, let us have the names of your *white crows*." For one, Weed named Henry Winter Davis of Maryland, who was elected to Congress by anti-foreigner and anti-Catholic support, calling itself the American party and nicknamed the Know-Nothings.

Lincoln knew this Davis was a cousin of Judge David Davis, and guessed that his Chicago convention manager, and the chief jurist of the Eighth Circuit, was operating through Weed. He laughed, "Davis has been posting you up on this question. He came from Maryland and has got Davis on the brain. Maryland must, I think, be like New Hampshire, a good state to move from." And he told of a witness swearing his age was sixty when the court knew he was much older; the court rebuking the witness got the reply, "Oh, you're thinking about that fifteen years I lived down on the Eastern Shore of Maryland; that was so much lost time and don't count."

Names, personalities, localities, political shadings, and shifts were talked over; they were two schoolmasters in politics enjoying each other's technic and experience. No name for Secretary of the Navy came up to suit Weed; perhaps any wooden figurehead taken off a ship and dressed up with a wig and whiskers would do. "Oh," said Lincoln, "'wooden midshipmen' answer very well in novels, but we must have a live Secretary of the Navy."

Would Bates of Missouri do for Attorney-General? Yes, Weed was sure; he paid tribute to Bates's personal reliability, which reminded Lincoln of a story; and he sketched and wove a series of incidents leading to the office of Squire Barton in St. Louis facing a young man under suspicion of having run away with a package of bank money. The squire led the young man to an open window and said: "If you didn't steal that money, my advice is that you face the music, and I will stand by you; but if, as I strongly suspect, you were tempted and that money isn't honestly yours, I advise you [pointing through the open window] to make tracks for that tall timber, and to put the Mississippi

between you and those bank fellows as soon as you can find a crossing." "And how much shall I pay you for your advice?" asked the client. "If you intend to hook it, five dollars; if you stay and prove yourself an honest lad, nothing."

Fresh December sausages were served Weed at breakfast in the Lincoln home. He asked for a second helping, with the remark that he felt safe in a section of the country where pork was cheaper than dogs. "That reminds me," said Lincoln. A Joliet grocer, doing a large sausage business, had his store full of customers one Saturday evening, and his boys were piling the scales with sausages when a neighbor, who had quarreled with him that day, came into the grocery and walked up to the counter holding two big dead cats by the tails. As he threw them on the counter, he said, so that all the customers could hear: "This makes seven today; I'll call around Monday and get my money for them."

They spent two chatty days together. Lincoln told Weed it was pleasant that he was not tied by promises of offices; it was one advantage of having been a dark-horse candidate. "I have not promised an office to any man," he told Weed. Furthermore, "Some gentlemen, who have been quite nervous about the object of your visit here, would be surprised, if not incredulous, were I to tell them that during the two days we have passed together you have made no application, suggestion, or allusion to appointments." Telegrams had come to Lincoln from prominent Republicans trying to head off appointments Weed might seek, he told the New York leader.

They talked about whether promises, assurances, laws could straighten out the wrong feeling between the peoples of the North and South. They agreed as to the people of the South, "We must not only let them alone, but we must somehow convince them that we do let them alone." Lincoln gave Weed three short resolutions to carry to Washington and give to Senator Trumbull. Then Lincoln wrote to Senator Trumbull: "Thurlow Weed was with me nearly all day yesterday, and left last night with three short resolutions which I drew up, and

which, or the substance of which, I think, would do much good if introduced and unanimously supported by our friends. They do not touch the territorial question. Mr. Weed goes to Washington with them; and says he will first of all confer with you and Mr. Hamlin. I think it would be best for Mr. Seward to introduce them, and Mr. Weed will let him know that I think so. Show this to Mr. Hamlin, but beyond him do not let my name be known in the matter." Two of the three short resolutions went further than any public declarations Lincoln had ever made in the direction of satisfying the South, while another of the resolutions was the most radical practical change he had ever suggested for the Fugitive Slave Law. The first resolution aimed so to fix the Constitution that Congress could not lawfully interfere with slavery in slave states; the second would arrange for fugitive slaves to have a jury trial; the third would ask northern states to change, to "review," their laws which interfered with the capture and trial of runaway slaves.

Weed, the New York boss, was to carry the three resolutions, all privately, but never publicly, indorsed by Lincoln, the President-elect; and Weed was to meet Trumbull and Hamlin, Illinois and Maine senators, and they would confer; if they decided after conferring that the resolutions should be introduced, then it was Lincoln's wish that Seward, New York senator, should introduce them; and Lincoln had arranged that Weed should let Seward know that he, Lincoln, thought Seward was the best man for introducing them; the letter of Lincoln to Trumbull informing him of all these arrangements and views on the part of Lincoln was to be shown to Hamlin and to nobody else; and beyond Hamlin, Lincoln's name was not to be mentioned in the matter; Lincoln was not particular as to whether his language in the three short resolutions was used; the substance of his language would do as well; and the one condition under which Lincoln believed the resolutions would "do much good" was the condition of "unanimous" support.

As it happened, the resolutions were not introduced. Trumbull, believing Lincoln to be "cunning as a fox," probably sus-

pected that Lincoln was up to something beyond the passage of the resolutions embodying plans that Lincoln had never mentioned publicly as important. It stuck in Trumbull's mind that Swett, the lifelong friend of Lincoln, could say of Lincoln, "He's a trimmer, and such a trimmer as the world has never seen." Trumbull's impression of Lincoln was: "He is secretive, communicates no more of his own thoughts and purposes than he thinks will subserve the ends he has in view; he has the faculty of gaining the confidence of others by apparently giving them his own, and in that way attaches to himself many friends; he is one of the shrewdest men I have ever known; he is by no means the unsophisticated, artless man that many take him to be."

Lincoln had spent two days with Thurlow Weed, refreshed and loosened up Weed with stories, fables, anecdotes coming pat to each point in hand, even to the topic of fresh sausages at breakfast. Lincoln had searched his way through the upstairs and downstairs rooms of Weed's mind and heart; Lincoln had trained himself, for years, to put men at their ease while pumping them with quiet questions, learning by asking, and asking with keen, soft persistence. He knew that Weed was in communication with, and was hearing the wants of, such men of power as A. T. Stewart, the leading New York merchant, and August Belmont, New York representative of the Rothschilds, international bankers, and a leading financier among the northern capitalists to whom the South was in debt two hundred million dollars. Also Lincoln learned from Weed in elaborate detail how Weed hated and feared the extremists and radicals of the North and South; Weed was a man of compromises and adjustments, a type of the boss or leader controlling a large organization among territories, precincts, henchmen; they trade off this for that and fix arrangements that act as barriers or stopgaps; Weed was for conciliation between North and South; he believed the misunderstandings could be patched up.

Lincoln saw this and wrote three short, bold resolutions that with "unanimous support," as he wrote Trumbull, would stave

off all future trouble between the South and North; he handed the resolutions in his writing, to Weed, to carry to Washington to have Seward introduce if a conference of Weed, Trumbull, and Hamlin should decide they might win "unanimous support"; and Lincoln knew that it was a foregone and absolute impossibility that such Abolitionist Republicans as Joshua Giddings or Owen Lovejoy would for a fraction of a moment consider voting for laws to take away all future power of Congress to interfere with slavery in the slave states or to ask northern states to change or "review" their laws that had been passed with the intention of defeating the Federal Fugitive Slave Law.

The proportions of some phases of the incident lifted it into the ludicrous. It helped to accomplish one thing, the cementing of loyalty between Lincoln and Weed, which was the main intention of Lincoln.

A few weeks later, however, word came to Lincoln that the New York boss claimed that Lincoln had handed over to him the say-so as to Federal jobs for New York Republicans. And Lincoln wrote to Weed: "As to the matter of dispensing patronage, it perhaps will surprise you to learn that I have information that you claim to have my authority to arrange that matter in New York. I do not believe you have so claimed; but still so some men say. On that subject you know all I have said to you is 'justice for all,' and I have said nothing more particular to any one. I say this to reassure you that I have not changed my position."

Chapter 158

Talk came from New York about a scheme to take that city out of the Union and set up a Free City. "I reckon," Lincoln remarked to a New Yorker, "it will be some time before the Front Door sets up housekeeping on its own account."

Important men got off the train at Springfield. Salmon P. Chase, governor of Ohio, was one. He came by invitation, Lin-

coln having written him: "In these troublous times I would much like a conference with you. Please visit me here at once." Not merely was Chase important; he looked so. Lincoln asked him to become Secretary of the Treasury. Chase wouldn't promise. He'd think it over. And with that he went back to Ohio. "He thinks he's a greater man than you are," said John Bunn to Lincoln, who said he would be glad if that were true; he wanted all the great men he could lay hold of for his Cabinet.

Simon Cameron, the Pennsylvania boss, came on. Judge Davis and the Lincoln managers at the Chicago convention had promised Cameron he could be Secretary of the Treasury. Cameron stayed in Springfield three days. He and Lincoln had long talks. Cameron left for his home in Pennsylvania with a letter signed by Lincoln to himself, reading:

> I think fit to notify you now that, by your permission, I shall at the proper time nominate you to the United States Senate for confirmation as Secretary of the Treasury, or as Secretary of War—which of the two I have not definitely decided. Please answer at your earliest convenience.

While Cameron journeyed homeward, his enemies brought evidence to Lincoln intended to show that Cameron was, in the lingo, "crooked as a dog's hind leg" and "crooked as a corkscrew." Lincoln wrote Cameron another letter; things had developed which made it impossible to take him, Cameron, into the Cabinet. Would he, Cameron, write a letter publicly declining any Cabinet place? And Cameron's answer was a bundle of recommendations outnumbering the opposition three to one, which Lincoln looked over, and later wrote Cameron that he wouldn't make a Cabinet appointment for Pennsylvania without consulting Cameron.

Thus names slipped in and out, though Seward for Secretary of State and Judge Edward Bates of Missouri for Attorney-General were well settled from the start, besides the place of Secretary of the Interior for Caleb B. Smith of Indiana, which latter was promised by Lincoln's Chicago convention managers.

He invited John A. Gilmer of North Carolina to Springfield to talk over a Cabinet appointment, but Gilmer didn't come. On January 3rd he wrote to Seward he hadn't decided who would be the heads of the War and Navy departments. "Your selection for the State Department having become public, I am happy to find scarcely any objection to it. I shall have trouble with every other Northern cabinet appointment—so much so that I shall have to defer them as long as possible to avoid being teased into insanity, to make changes."

Judge John D. Caton came. He was a Democrat. Also he was known as "the telegraph king." He was for the preservation of the Union, for a sovereign Federal Government over states with uninterrupted lines of free communication. "I advised him to avoid bringing on the war by precipitate action, but let the Southerners begin it; to forbear as long as forbearance could be tolerated," said Caton. "He listened intently, replied the struggle was inevitable, no single party could sustain him; he must rely on the great masses of the people, and he would try to pursue such a course as would secure their support."

As the lines of faces passed before Lincoln in the governor's room, he met no two alike; eyes, voices, intonations, shrugs, he gave each his own reading and met it by that; he met some arguments with argument; he met some questions with a baffling counterquestion; he told stories as he chose for those who had heard of him as a story-teller and wanted him to perform; but he picked his stories according to the faces and voices that were before him.

Henry Villard, who stayed two weeks in Springfield writing for German newspapers, was "sorry this fondness for low stories clung to him." Villard couldn't make out Lincoln at all, and wrote: "He seemed to be bent upon making his hit by fair means or foul. He never hesitated to tell a coarse or even outright nasty story, if it served his purpose. More than once I heard him 'with malice aforethought' get off purposely some repulsive fiction in order to rid himself of an uncomfortable caller. Again and again I felt disgust and humiliation that such

a person should have been called upon to direct the destinies of a great nation." Yet when Thurlow Weed came and spent two days filled with hours of talk with Lincoln, he told friends, "Lincoln talked without restraint, but I never heard him use a profane or indecent word, or tell a story that might not be repeated in the presence of ladies."

When Villard arrived, Lincoln didn't recall that he had forgotten to send back to Villard the buffalo robe Villard had loaned him the year before when he was shivering in the Kansas wind. And Villard didn't remind him.

Hannah Armstrong came, the widow of Jack, the mother of Duff, strong-hearted, black-eyed Hannah Armstrong. Lincoln took her two hands. They talked, homely and heart-warming talk. He held the hands that had been good to him, so long ago, when he was young and the sap ran wild in him. They talked. And she was going. "They'll kill ye, Abe." "Hannah, if they do kill me, I shall never die another death."

Another beautiful old woman came. While on the Eighth Circuit, Lincoln had eaten at her house. "One day you came along and we had eaten up everything, and I could give you nothing but a bowl of bread and milk, and when you got up you said it was good enough for the President of the United States."

Browning dropped in from Quincy and wrote in his diary on February 7, 1861: "Changed in the night and hard frozen and very cold this morning. Met Mr. Lincoln in the basement of the State House this morning. He took me aside and gave me a very earnest invitation to go with him to Washington."

"It will do you good to get down to Washington," Joe Gillespie offered as cheer one day. "I know it will," was Lincoln's answer. "I only wish I could have got there to lock the door before the horse was stolen. But when I get to the spot, I can find the tracks."

For his regular secretary he had a trusted, reliable, accurate, scrupulous young man, sober as a work horse, earnest as the multiplication table; he had freckles and reddish hair; a young

German from the *Pike County Sucker.* This was Nicolay, secretive, dependable, carrying messages not to be written but whispered, feeling equally with Lincoln the groaning loads of responsibility; the favorite word of Nicolay was "responsibility."

The other or second secretary was not strictly engaged as such, but he was going to Washington. Lincoln had said, "We can't take all Illinois with us down to Washington, but let Hay come." A keen and whimsical lad, this Hay. He had been class poet at Brown University, graduated, gone home to Warsaw, Illinois, then to Pike County, and later to Springfield to study law with his Uncle Milt, who had an office on the same floor as Lincoln & Herndon.

"I am sure to die soon," the young poet had written, and again: "I shall work out of these shadows. If not there is a cool rest under the violets." Yet he wrote notes in French to a sweetheart, and had a handsome, negligent elegance all the girls in Springfield liked. He wore a derby hat, buttoned the top button on a long loose sack coat of black, and sauntered with an ease that caught Lincoln's eye. "Let Hay come." Hay caught every accent and shading of Lincoln as an artist and as a subject for artists, an Æsop, Quixote, and Ezekiel; he was young, this Hay; he was to grow older.

Across many letters Lincoln wrote for his secretaries the notation "Need not answer this." One was from an inventor saying: "It looks like war. I have invented a machine which will fire 400 bullets simultaneously; write me if you wish me to explain it to you."

Advice arrived from a Tennessee women who had had a dream about how to keep out of war. Another suggested he should have all his food tasted. Still another letter writer told Lincoln to resign at the inaugural and appoint Douglas as the new President.

Again Horace Greeley came, after lecturing in Chicago on "Self-made Men." He and Lincoln sat in the St. Nicholas Hotel for a three-hour talk. Greeley felt Lincoln ought to show a strong hand and be more decisive in action. In his manner

toward Southerners, Greeley saw Lincoln as "apologetic, deprecatory." Again Greeley felt Lincoln reaching for him and said to himself he wouldn't be brought into the circle of Lincoln's personal influence. And again, he went away without hearing a story or anecdote from Lincoln.

Chapter 159

THE question whether Simon Cameron, the Republican boss of Pennsylvania, was a measurably honest man or a rascal who would do harm, used up many hours of Lincoln's time as the days went by. Several states sent delegations to stop the appointment of Cameron to the Cabinet. But Cameron kept sending more witnesses for him than the opposition sent against him.

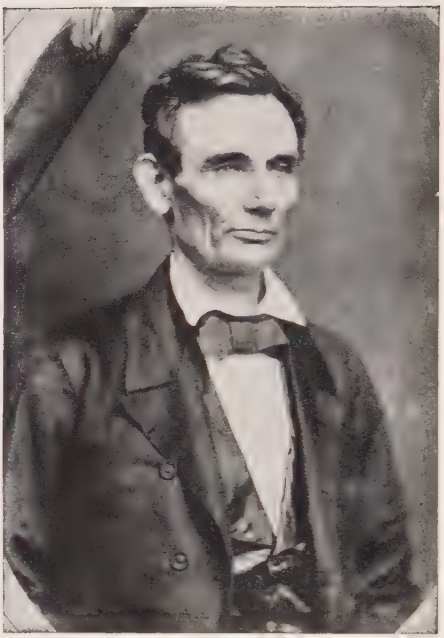
In a letter of January 3 asking Cameron to decline a Cabinet appointment, Lincoln wrote: "Better do this at once, before things change so that you cannot honorably decline, and I be openly compelled to recall the tender. No person living knows or has an intimation that I write this letter." A postscript cried, "Telegraph me instantly on receipt of this, saying, 'All right.' "

"I learn that your feelings were wounded by the terms of my letter," Lincoln wrote to Cameron on January 13. He was referring to his letter ten days previous, asking Cameron to refuse publicly a Cabinet job. "I wrote that letter under great anxiety, and perhaps I was not so guarded in its terms as I should have been; but I beg you to be assured I intended no offense. I say to you now that I have not doubted that you would perform the duties of a department ably and faithfully." Then with this same letter Lincoln sent an inclosure, dated ten days previous, which would be the letter that Cameron could show, if necessary, to anybody who asked. It softened the sharp tone of the former letter, made the point, "You were here by my invitation, and not upon any suggestion of your own," and set forth, "With much pain I now say to you that you will relieve me from great

Willie Lincoln (left). Mary Todd Lincoln (upper and center). Tad Lincoln (lower).

Photographs of Willie and Tad Lincoln from Frederick H. Meserve Collection

Photographs of Mary Todd Lincoln from Oliver R. Barrett Collection



Sarah Bush Lincoln and her stepson, Abraham. She said of their companionship, and it was true, "His mind and mine, what little I had, seemed to run together." He was pleased to have letters from his father with the news, "The Old Woman is well." Lincoln chose the above photograph of himself as the one for her to remember him by, when he was leaving Illinois in 1861. *See* page 417. The photograph of Lincoln is from an ambrotype by H. H. Cole, Peoria, Illinois, probably 1859.

Photographs from Frederick H. Meserve Collection

embarrassment by allowing me to recall the offer." And he told Cameron, "Destroy the offensive letter, or return it to me."

"Another battalion of Cameron men arrived here today," a reporter wrote in Springfield on January 24. And a week later the Philadelphia *Sunday Mercury* published a report of what Lincoln told the vineyard pilgrims. It sounded so much like what Lincoln probably said that the *Chicago Tribune* reprinted it.

"Gentlemen," ran Lincoln's advice, "in the formation of my Cabinet, I shall aim as nearly as possible at perfection. Any man whom I may appoint to such position must be as far as possible, like Cæsar's wife, pure and above suspicion, of unblemished reputation and undoubted integrity." Thus he pictured the ideal Cabinet officer, and then proceeded specifically to Cameron.

"The feeling against him appears to come from Ohio and one or two of the western states. His opponents charge him with corruption in obtaining contracts, and contend that if he is appointed he will use the patronage of his office for his own private gain. I have no knowledge of the acts charged against him, but I intend to make an investigation of the whole matter, by allowing his opponents to submit their proof, and I shall give him an opportunity of explaining any part he may have had in the transactions alleged against him."

Lincoln rambled along as dryly and simply as if the case were no more involved than that of some Illinois horse thief. "For my own part I can see no impropriety in his taking contracts, or making money out of them, as that is a mere matter of business. There is nothing wrong in this, unless some unfairness or dishonesty is shown, which supposition I have no doubt General Cameron will be able to disprove."

Yet the case was one far out of ordinary politics, he would have them know. He looked them in the eye, and went on: "I shall deal fairly with him, but I say to you, gentlemen, frankly, that if the charges against him are proven, he cannot have a seat in my Cabinet, as I will not have any man associated with me whose character is impeached. I will say further that, if he

vindicates himself, I have the strongest desire to place him in the position you wish him to fill, and which you think the interests of your state demand."

And he gave the men facing him something to think about in their own futures as politicians, in saying: "If, after he has been appointed, I should be deceived by subsequent transactions of a disreputable character, the responsibility will rest upon you, gentlemen of Pennsylvania, who have so strongly presented his claim to my consideration. But this is supposing a state of things which may never occur."

Early one morning in January, Lincoln knocked at the door of Gustave Koerner in a hotel room in Springfield. Koerner was still in bed; he got up and unbolted the door. In walked Lincoln, saying: "I want to see you and Judd. Where is he?" Koerner gave Lincoln the number of Judd's room. And soon came Judd and Lincoln, and, while Koerner was putting on his shirt, Lincoln said: "I am in a quandary. Pennsylvania is entitled to a Cabinet office. But whom shall I appoint?" Judd and Koerner answered in one voice, "Not Cameron." They said Cameron couldn't be trusted; he had the name of a tricky and corrupt politician. "I know, I know," said Lincoln, "but can I get along if that state should oppose my Administration?" And that was about all of the interview.

The Cameron affair was breaking in on Lincoln's sleep of nights. A telegram from A. K. McClure, the Philadelphia newspaper editor, said the appointment of Cameron would split the Republican party in Pennsylvania. But Seward, Weed, Davis, Swett, were pushing hard for Cameron.

E. Peck of Springfield wrote to Trumbull, "David Davis is quite huffy because of the objections raised to Cameron." And Trumbull wrote to Lincoln: "Cameron is totally unfit. He is very generally regarded as a trading, unscrupulous politician. He is a great manager and by his schemes has for the moment created an apparent public sentiment in Penna. in his favor. Many of the persons strenuously urging his appointment are doubtless doing it in anticipation of a compensation. You may

perhaps ask, how, if these things are true, does he have so many friends to support him, and such representative men? I am surprised at it, but the world is full of great examples of men succeeding for a time by intrigue and management."

Even the Seward appointment had left sore spots. Trumbull had written that William Cullen Bryant and other New York Republicans had fought the "gridiron" street-railway bill engineered at Albany by Weed, and believed Seward to be a Weed tool. Lincoln replied that the sentiment in New York that had sent a united delegation for Seward to Chicago "ought not and must not be snubbed." He underlined the words, "I will myself take care of the question of 'corrupt jobs.'" And he had made the Seward appointment finally, however, only after sending the documents concerned to Trumbull and Hamlin to O. K., which they did.

"Office seekers swarmed in the greatest numbers from Illinois," Horace White noticed. "Illinois could have filled every office in the national blue book without satisfying half the demands. Every considerable town had several candidates for its own post office, and the applicants were generally men who had real claims by reason of party service and personal character."

The office seekers watched Lincoln's habits, waylaid him, wedged in, and reminded him not to forget them. If personally refused, they sent appeals again to Lincoln's ear through friends who came to Lincoln on his invitation to discuss some special matter, and when that was over they would say: "There is one more thing, Mr. Lincoln: So-and-So wants to be Minister to Peru, revenue collector at Peoria, or United States marshal in Utah."

They sharpened his loneliness. As one clique of callers went out of the door and he was with an old friend, he threw his hands in the air and made motions like a man trying to scare off sheep, knowing, however, that the sheep only looked like sheep, only wore sheep's clothing.

If a man shook hands and broke into a grin, saying: "As for me, Mr. Lincoln, I just dropped in to wish you well. I don't

want any office. I'm going back home with the folks and I'll do anything I can to help you," Lincoln would put both hands on the man's shoulders and nearly cry. When that happened his bones took a rest, his face lighted.

One who kept wedging in, by one device and another pressing claims on Lincoln, was Judge David Davis. Lincoln spoke to Whitney about it, and as Whitney told it: "Lincoln inveighed to me in the bitterest terms against Judge Davis's greed and importunity for office, and summarized his disgust in these words, 'I know it is an awful thing for me to say, but I already wish some one else was here in my place.' "

Strife was ahead, furious interlocked forces trying to strangle each other. The one resolve shaping far back of every act and word of Lincoln was that the Union of states must be held together. Dr. William Jayne said Lincoln told Herndon: "Billy, I hope there will be no trouble; but I will make the South a graveyard rather than see a slavery gospel triumph, or successful secession destroy the Union."

And he told Gillespie that with a Cabinet picked from the lawyers he had traveled with on the old Eighth Circuit, he believed he could head off war or settle secession without a battle. "But," said Gillespie, "those old lawyers are all Democrats." "I know it," came the reply, "but I would rather have Democrats I know than Republicans I don't know."

Sometimes, as the high howling of war threats came shriller, Lincoln would speak indirectly as though if a people want to fight there is no stopping them; wars have their own chaotic way of arriving; politicians must acknowledge tidal waves and pent volcanoes. Lincoln told of a congressman who had opposed the War of 1812, and, when asked to oppose the Mexican War, had answered: "I opposed one war; that was enough for me. I am now perpetually in favor of war, pestilence, and famine."

Chapter 160

Some of the Illinois friends of Lincoln were puzzled early in February. They couldn't figure what Lincoln was up to—if anything. It was baffling.

Next to Trumbull, Congressman William Kellogg of Canton, Illinois, was closer to Lincoln than any other Republican in the matter of favors, offices, patronage. And it was Kellogg who stood up in the House of Representatives one day and introduced a bill to amend the Constitution so that slaves could be taken into any territory south of 36° 30′ from any state where slavery then lawfully existed.

The next day the *Chicago Tribune* read Kellogg out of the Republican party, declaring another day later, "We are opposed in toto to any double-tongued proposition which shall add the crime of swindling to that of compromising with traitors." And the *Tribune* had its Springfield correspondent report on whether Lincoln was leaning toward compromise, the dispatch in reply saying there was "no belief that Mr. Lincoln was disposed to anything smacking of renunciation and humiliation."

Then the *Tribune* began printing in italics at the head of its editorial column, day after day, a decisive utterance from Lincoln, "I will suffer death before I will consent, or advise my friends to consent, to any concession or compromise which looks like buying the privilege of taking possession of the Government to which we have a Constitutional right; I should regard any concession in the face of menace as the destruction of the Government itself, and the consent on all hands that our system shall be brought to a level with the existing disorganized state of affairs in Mexico. But this thing will hereafter be, as it is now, in the hands of the people." Regarding the source of this utterance the *Tribune* said, "We have reason to know the opinions are those which Mr. Lincoln has entertained."

Kellogg's Compromise Bill had been howled down forthwith by the radical Republicans in Congress, while John A. McCler-

nand, a Democrat from the Springfield district, arose and complimented his Illinois colleague on the ability, justice, and patriotism of the proposed plan. Also McClernand called attention to the close personal relations between Kellogg and President-elect Lincoln; high importance attached to the compromise plan if it had been handed to him by Lincoln. And Kellogg courteously interrupted McClernand to say positively it was ab-so-lute-ly his plan alone, and he and nobody else was responsible.

What was it that Lincoln had done, in letting one of his closest political friends make a public stand in favor of the extension of slavery into all western territory south of 36° 30′? Eleven weeks previous he had written to Kellogg, "Entertain no proposition for a compromise in regard to the extension of slavery. The instant you do they have us under again; all our labor is lost, and sooner or later must be done over." Then some two weeks previous, on January 21, he had held a long conference with Kellogg in Springfield. And what he had said to Kellogg, and advised, was with the condition scribbled so often in postscripts to Lincoln letters, "Confidential, for your eye only." Then Kellogg had gone on to Washington, spoken for compromise, for extension of slavery into all new territories to be formed south of 36° 30′, was howled down by the radicals of his party, read out by the *Chicago Tribune*—as both he and Lincoln had probably expected.

Why had Lincoln and Kellogg done this? Its first result was good will from the Democrat, McClernand. In that same week the Congress of the Confederate States of America, meeting in Montgomery, Alabama, elected a president and vice president. Strife loomed. The Democrats of southern Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio, near the slave-state borders, could say to their people that if the southern congressmen had not walked out and left the Union, there might have been a chance for the extension of slavery into the western territories. A dozen McClernands, who leaned to the Union, were strengthened. They could face their constituents with one more good excuse for Unionism. John A. Logan, "Black Jack," swinging southern Illinois politically, was

wanted in Lincoln's plans, and Lincoln was reaching after him; the "half horse, half alligator men" were down in Logan's region. Then too, the slave state of Missouri had a fresh argument for staying in the Union.

The action was mazy. Lincoln wrote to Seward, four days before Kellogg introduced his Compromise Bill in Congress, "To put us on the highroad to a slave empire, is the object of all these proposed compromises." Seward got the letter just about the day that Kellogg, the close friend of the President-elect, stood up and advocated an amendment to the Constitution legalizing slavery in territory south of 36° 30′. Lincoln's letter told Seward that Kellogg, "whom you probably know, was here in a good deal of anxiety seeking to ascertain to what extent I would be consenting for our friends to go in the way of compromise on the now vexed question. While he was with me I received a despatch from Senator Trumbull, at Washington, alluding to the same question and telling me to await letters. I therefore told Mr. Kellogg that when I should receive these letters posting me as to the state of affairs at Washington, I would write to you, requesting you to let him see my letter. To my surprise, when the letters mentioned by Judge Trumbull came, they made no allusion to the 'vexed question.' This baffled me so much that I was near not writing you at all, in compliance to what I have said to Judge Kellogg."

And all the time Kellogg, who asked Congress to consider his bill to compromise with the South and make slavery lawful below the 36° 30′ line, was getting more favors, appointments of men to office whose names he put up to Lincoln, than any other politician in Illinois except Trumbull. Seward couldn't figure out the motives. He believed Lincoln was all muddled up. It was the time of the beginning of men like Samuel Bowles of the Springfield, Massachusetts, *Republican,* saying, "Lincoln is a Simple Susan," and of others saying, "Lincoln would like to have God on his side, but he must have Kentucky."

The incident was a piece of Lincoln propaganda. It came in the same first week in February in which his closest friend among

newspapers, the *Illinois State Journal,* shot the fierce bolt: "Before we talk of concession we want it settled that we have a Government. Let the stolen forts, arsenals, and navy yards be returned to the rightful owners—tear down your Rattlesnake and Pelican flag and run up the ever-glorious Stars and Stripes—disperse your traitorous mobs, and let every man return to his duty. Then come to us with your list of grievances."

The North was crying, "Treason!" the South, "Freedom!" One called the Union sacred; the other spoke of State Sovereignty as holy. Propaganda was beginning to seethe. Southern newspapers were telling of riots and bloodshed in New England factory cities. Northern papers were telling of food shortages in the southern states.

Incidents in the day's chronicles were confusing. A mob in Ann Arbor, Michigan, broke into an Abolitionist meeting, smashed the doors and windows, and demolished the furniture of a church. In North Carolina, the *Raleigh Banner* was saying: "The big heart of the people is still in the Union. Less than a hundred thousand politicians are endeavoring to destroy the liberties and usurp the rights of more than thirty millions of people. If the people permit it, they deserve the horrors of the civil war which will ensue."

Five trunk-line railroads sent their head men to a conference where they reported increased receipts, and recommended the Crittenden Compromise, conciliation, and peace. In Chicago Cyrus H. McCormick, the farm-machinery manufacturer, was a leader of a mass meeting which declared for "peaceful separation" of the states. Also the McCormick interests were being denounced by the *Chicago Tribune* as "indecent" in trying to rush through Congress extensions of patents which would not expire till the following October 23. "Why should the job be put through in such headlong haste?" asked the *Tribune.* "Their indecent haste is no compliment to the present head of the Patent Bureau, for it indicates that they believe him better suited to their purpose than his successor, under Mr. Lincoln, is likely to be."

Californians in Washington were saying the only insurance against a revolution and secession in their state would be a Pacific railway. Plans for a Pacific republic were under way, they said, while Congress was doing nothing for a transportation link that would hold the West Coast in the Union.

One of the few facts all men agreed on was that the Union of States from the East to the West Coast was held together in loose and rambling cords of connection. On Christmas Day of 1860 newspapers carried a telegram from far out in Nebraska, at Fort Kearney, as far west as the wires ran. It said: "The weather is bitter cold here. The pony express, with San Francisco dates of the 12th, passed here at 4 o'clock this morning."

The iron horse had been ready for years to run and haul across the Great Plains. Politics stopped him from starting.

Henry Winter Davis of Maryland told Congress: "We are at the end of the insane revel of partisan license which, for thirty years, has worn the mask of Government. We are about to close the masquerade for the dance of death."

And the *New York Tribune* stated it as a fact that Lincoln had appointed Davis to a seat in his Cabinet. But it was not a fact.

Donn Piatt came from Springfield saying, "Lincoln told us he felt like a surveyor in the wild woods of the West, who, while looking for a corner, kept an eye over his shoulder for an Indian."

Chapter 161

A HATTER from Brooklyn, New York, called one January day and presented Lincoln with a black silk hat. The President-elect turned to Mrs. Lincoln and remarked, "Well, wife, if nothing else comes out of this scrape, we are going to have some new clothes."

Attentions and incidents of that sort pleased Mrs. Lincoln. She had a sprightly manner of saying, "We are pleased with our advancement."

In the hustle of deciding what to take along to the White House, asked about this, that and the other thing to be done or not done, she would sometimes burst out, "God, no!"

Pressure came on her to give her husband the names of men who should be appointed to office, with reasons why. Of one woman for whose husband she got a political appointment, Mrs. Lincoln told another woman, "She little knows what a hard battle I had for it, and how near he came to getting nothing."

She spoke of fears about her health, would mention "my racked frame" to other women, and say she hoped the chills she suffered from in earlier years would not return in Washington.

Ugly clouds shaped on the horizons, boots with nasty heel-prints on white linen and dove-gray silk. War would be messy. "If the country was only peaceful, all would be well," wrote Mary Todd Lincoln.

"I am weary of intrigue," she could remark, while in the same breath naming a former friend and saying, "She possesses such a miserable disposition and so false a tongue," rushing on with, "Such a woman no one respects," and adding, "As a child and young girl she could not be outdone in falsehood," and then, before changing the subject: "She is so seldom in my thoughts. I have so much more that is attractive, both in bodily presence, and my mind's eye, to interest me. I grieve for those who have to come in contact with her malice, yet even that is so well understood, the object of her wrath generally rises, with good people, in proportion to her vindictiveness. How far are we removed from such a person!"

Poor Mary Todd Lincoln! She was no more sure of herself as a middle-aged woman than when as a girl she had stood in the centre of a room during a thunderstorm crying, "Hide me, O my Savior!"

She had the book, "Elements of Character," given to her by her husband. Passages in it were marked telling her how to control her personal development. But it was no use. She was what she was.

The city of Washington, as the time for her entry into its society approached, seemed to be a city of riddles, a city that mocked at her. The *Atlantic Monthly's* leading article in that January of 1861 was saying: "Washington is the Elysium of oddities, the Limbo of absurdities, an imbroglio of ludicrous absurdities. Planned on a scale of surpassing grandeur, its architectural execution is almost contemptible. The houses are low, the rents high; the hacks are black, the horses white; the squares are triangles, except that of the Capitol, which is oval. It has a Monument that will never be finished, a Capitol that is to have a dome, a Scientific Institute which does nothing but report the rise and fall of the thermometer. In spite of the labors of the Smithsonian Institution, it has no particular weather; it rains, hails, snows, blows, freezes, and melts in Washington, all in the space of twenty-four hours. The men are fine-looking, the women homely. The latter have plain faces, but magnificent busts and graceful figures. The former have an imposing presence and an empty pocket, a great name and a small conscience."

Small crumbs of comfort, if any, could be picked up from the *Atlantic Monthly,* regarding the city to which she was going for a home the next four years. It might be as unsatisfying as Springfield.

The *Atlantic* was saying: "If the beggars of Dublin, the cripples of Constantinople, and the lepers of Damascus should assemble in Baden-Baden during a Congress of Kings, then Baden-Baden would resemble Washington. Presidents, Senators, Honorables, Judges, Generals, Commodores, Governors, and Exes of all descriptions congregate here as thick as pickpockets at a horse race or women at a wedding in church. Add Ambassadors, Plenipotentiaries, Lords, Counts, Barons, Chevaliers, the great and small fry of the Legations, Captains, Lieutenants, Claim-Agents, Negroes, Perpetual-Motion Men, Fire-Eaters, Irishmen, Plug-Uglies, Hoosiers, Gamblers, Californians, Mexicans, Japanese, Indians, and Organ-Grinders, together with females to match all varieties of males, and you have a vague notion of

the people of Washington." Mary Todd Lincoln could shiver. Perhaps the chills of earlier years would come back.

Three circles there were in Washington, (1) the Mudsills, (2) the Hotels, (3) the White House. In the first were Negroes, Clerks, Irish Laborers, Patent and other Agents, Hackmen, Faro Dealers, Washerwomen, and Newspaper Correspondents. In the second were the Newest Strangers, Harpists, Members of Congress, Concertina-men, Provincial Judges, Card-Writers, College-Students, Unprotected Females, Stool-Pigeons, Contractors, Sellers of Toothpicks. And, said the *Atlantic,* "It is worthy of remark that the circles of the White House and the Hotels rise higher and sink lower than that of the Mudsill, but whether this is a fact or a necessity is not known."

And society in Washington? "It dresses as it pleases, drinks as much as it chooses, eats indiscriminately, sleeps promiscuously, gets up at all hours of the day, and does as little work as possible. Its only trouble is lack of money. The normal condition of Washington society is, to use vernacular, 'busted.' It is not an isolated complaint. Everybody is 'busted.' When a man gets to Washington, no matter how long he stays or how soon he leaves, to this 'busted' complexion must he come at last. He abandons his purse and his conscience to the madness of the hour, dismisses every scruple and squanders his last cent. Then does he feel himself truly a Washington-man, able to look anybody in the face with the serene pride of an equal."

Such reports disturbed what little peace naturally held sway in the troubled head of Mary Todd Lincoln. She might be going to a city of tears and shadows. She would go there with new clothes, fresh ribbons, and see.

She had her method of ordering things to wear, writing such instructions as, "I am in need of two bonnets—I do not wish expensive ones, but I desire them of very fine quality and stylish." She wrote specifications to the milliner. "One bonnet, I wish fine, very fine, pretty shape. This I desire, to be trimmed with black love ribbon—with pearl edge. I cannot have it without the latter. I send you a bonnet which I think would be a pretty

style—perhaps mixed with the bow on top some black sprays would not be amiss." Then further details, "The strings of the love ribbon with black pearl edge—fine, full blk inside ruche, with very finest front white face flowers, perhaps mixed with a little blk."

She would need a house headdress, "something in great taste of black gauze ribbon, with pearl edge—I am sure I need not direct you—you will send me something comme il faut. I am expecting something very choice—I am as particular about the headdress as the bonnets."

Also she included the suggestion as to one bonnet, "The bonnet will be simple and of course, not expensive, yet I wish it to be of the very finest materials."

Chapter 162

One morning in January, Lincoln, with carpetbag in hand, was starting for Coles County, and met Whitney on a street in Springfield. He asked Whitney to ride the train a few stations. "I want to talk to you." Whitney was company. "I am worrying some to know what to do with my house. I don't want to sell myself out of a home; and if I rent it, it will be pretty well used up before I get back." They came to the station. "I guess my hat hain't chalked on this road," said Lincoln, meaning he had no pass so that the conductor could chalk his hat instead of collecting fare or a ticket.

Whitney insisted he would go in and see Bowen, the railroad superintendent, and get a pass. Bowen asked that the President-elect come into his office till the train arrived. After getting settled in a chair, Lincoln queried, "Bowen, how is business on your road now?" and later, becoming personal with Bowen: "You are a heap better off than I am playing President. When I first knew Whitney, I was getting on well—I was clean out of politics and contented to stay so. I had a good business, and my children were coming up, and were interesting to me—but

now—here I am——" And Lincoln paused . . . and shifted the talk into other lines.

Whitney got off the train at his station, Lincoln rode to Mattoon, missed connections with a passenger train, and took the caboose of a freight train to Charleston. The engine stopped at the station for orders, and Lincoln, with a shawl over his shoulders, and his boots in slush, mud, and ice, picked his way in the late evening dusk alongside the tracks the length of the freight train to the station, where a buggy was ready. Friends met him and took him to the house, where he was to stay overnight; the next morning he would go out to say good-by and have his last hour with his stepmother, Sally Bush Lincoln.

Among those who came to see Lincoln that evening was a lawyer, A. P. Dunbar, who had met and talked with Lincoln hundreds of times. But now that Lincoln was in five weeks to be inaugurated President, Dunbar didn't know whether he ought to be familiar and easy as in the old days. "If he is dignified and formal, I must act accordingly," said Dunbar. He knocked at the door of the house where Lincoln was staying; the family was finishing supper; Lincoln had eaten and was in the front room sitting before the fire; he heard the knock at the door and opened the door himself. In a flash he had Dunbar's right hand in his, and, resting another hand on Dunbar's shoulder, he burst out, "Lord A'mighty, Aleck, how glad I am to see you!"

Another man came in with Dunbar. They sat by the fire. Lincoln was soon drawing out one and another of his yarns, and nicely started on the fifth or sixth one, which was about a girl whose family kept a cow and who each evening would hunt up the cow and drive it home. "One day," said Lincoln, "she rode a horse bareback to the woods. On the way home the horse, frightened by a dog or something which darted from behind a bush, made a wild dash ahead, the girl still astride, when suddenly——" A knock came at the door and Lincoln halted the story, stepped across the room, opened the door, and welcomed in the Presbyterian minister, his wife, and two other ladies. Other callers arrived, the evening party began, and

Dunbar and his friend went away without hearing the rest of the story.

The next day Lincoln drove eight miles out to the old farm along the road over which he had hauled wood with an ox team. He came to the old log house he had cut logs for and helped smooth the chinks; from its little square windows he had seen late winter and early birds.

Sally Bush and he put their arms around each other and listened to each other's heartbeats. They held hands and talked, they talked without holding hands. Each looked into eyes thrust back in deep sockets. She was all of a mother to him.

He was her boy more than any born to her. He gave her a photograph of her boy, a hungry picture of him standing and wanting, wanting. He stroked her face a last time, kissed good-by, and went away.

She knew his heart would go roaming back often, that even when he rode in an open carriage in New York or Washington with soldiers, flags, and cheering thousands along the streets, he might just as like be thinking of her in the old log farmhouse out in Coles County, Illinois.

The sunshine of the prairie summer and fall months would come sifting down with healing and strength; between harvest and corn-plowing there would be rains beating and blizzards howling; and there would be the silence after snowstorms with white drifts piled against the fences, barns, and trees.

Chapter 163

THE Springfield *Journal* published an item one winter day reading: "We had the pleasure of inspecting the magnificent suit of clothes which has been in course of preparation for Mr. Lincoln since his visit to Chicago. It is manufactured by merchant tailors in Chicago and consists of a dress coat, pants, vest, and cravat. The coat is of the best cloth that can be bought in the country and made up with a taste and in a style that cannot be bought

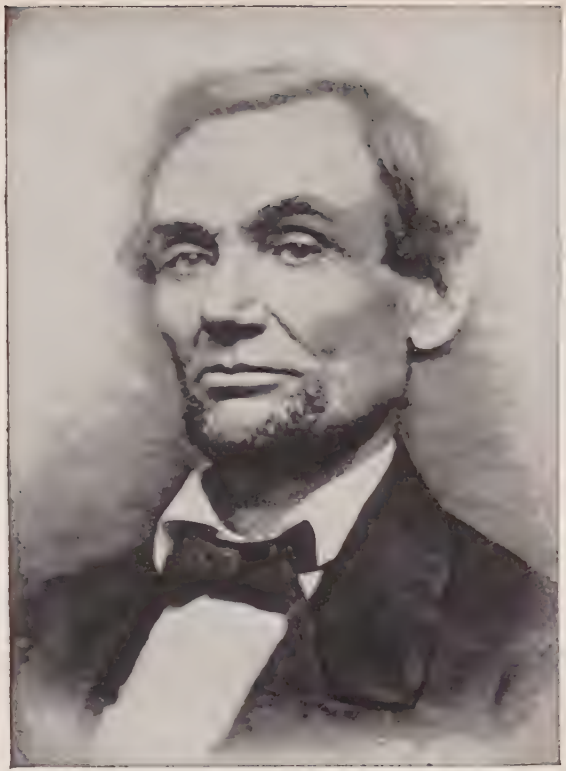
in any country. The pants are of the best and finest black cassimere; the vest of the finest grandiere silk and lines with buff goods of the same kind. The whole was presented to Mr. Lincoln with the following inscription, 'To Hon. Abraham Lincoln from A. D. Titsworth, Chicago, Ills.,' which is beautifully worked on the inside of the coat collar."

Inauguration Day was less than six weeks off. Letters warned Lincoln he would be killed before he could reach Washington. As they got fiercer, and more came, Lincoln sent Thomas S. Mather, Adjutant-General of Illinois, to Washington to sound Gen. Winfield Scott, the head of the army, on his loyalty. Scott was a Virginian. "Insist on a personal interview. Look him in the face. Note carefully what he says."

Mather came back to Springfield. He had found the Mexican War commander propped up with pillows, in bed, an old worn man with flesh in rolls over a warty face and neck.

The old general's breathing was heavy, and he half choked and wheezed out the words, "You may present my compliments to Mr. Lincoln when you reach Springfield, and tell him I shall expect him to come on to Washington as soon as he is ready." Also, the conqueror of Vera Cruz sent word: "Say to him that, when once here, I shall consider myself responsible for his safety. If necessary I'll plant cannon at both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue, and if any show their hands or even venture to raise a finger, I'll blow them to hell." Hearing these assurances that the Washington end of the inaugural was being taken care of, Lincoln went ahead with his plans to be there. When one friend warned him to have a guard, he replied, "What's the use of putting up a gap when the fence is down all around?"

He stepped into the house of Dr. John Todd one evening, holding a gripsack, and talking about the plans for his family to go to Washington. He handed the grip to Mrs. Grimsley, a widow and the only daughter of Dr. Todd, saying it held his "literary bureau." He would leave it in her charge. Speeches, notes, writings of different sorts, filled the grip. Two tied in red tape were the manuscripts of his lecture on "Discoveries and

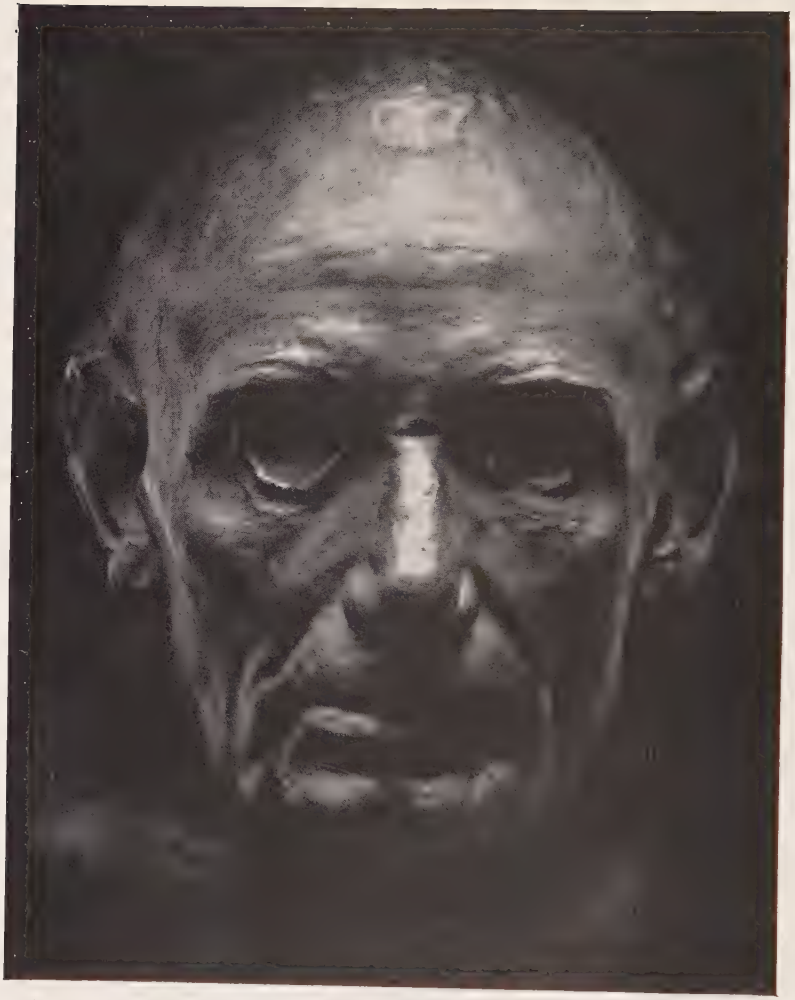


Lincoln in early 1861.

From photograph by Samuel G. Alschuler, Springfield.

From photograph attributed to C. S. German, Springfield.

Photographs from Frederick H. Meserve Collection



Lincoln: a Steichen portrait from the Volk life mask of 1860.

Inventions." He might not come back from Washington, he explained, and in that case she could do what she pleased with the papers. He was a little absent-minded about it all, as though perhaps he cherished old keepsakes too dearly, and the care of them was interfering with more important errands.

He cleared out files, burned and threw away letters; a caller one day picked up an armful of letters from the floor; among them were letters Lincoln had written his wife when he was a congressman thirteen years back. He closed up odds and ends. He sold back to Canisius the *Illinois Staats-Anzeiger.*

The last week of his stay in Springfield, in Illinois, arrived. The steps up to the little two-story cottage at Eighth and Jackson streets felt the tread of several thousand people who came between seven and twelve o'clock on the night of February 6, some to say good-by, some to see what they would see.

The President-elect stood near the front door shaking hands; his son, Bob, back from school, and Mrs. Lincoln and four of her sisters assisted. Mrs. Lincoln stood in the centre of the parlor and wore, a St. Louis correspondent noted, a beautiful full trail, white moire antique silk, with a small French lace collar. Her neck was ornamented with a string of pearls. Her headdress was a simple and delicate vine. She was, the correspondent telegraphed his paper, "a lady of fine figure and accomplished address, well calculated to grace and to do honor at the White House."

Newspaper men were kindly, admiring in their sketches of Mrs. Lincoln, and references to her. She was whirling along in dizzy realizations of her fondest hopes of social importance. She had made a two-week trip East, the Cleveland, Ohio, *Herald,* saying on January 10: "Conductor Ames's train this morning brought in Mrs. Lincoln, accompanied by her brother, Mr. C. M. Smith and Hon. Amos Tuck of New Hampshire. They will proceed to New York by way of Buffalo, and, after a few days' stay to make purchases for the White House, will go to Cambridge, Mass., to visit Mr. Lincoln's son who is at Harvard College. Pres. Gardiner tendered the courtesies of the road from

Toledo to Cleveland, and Supt. Nottingham set apart a special car to take the party to Buffalo."

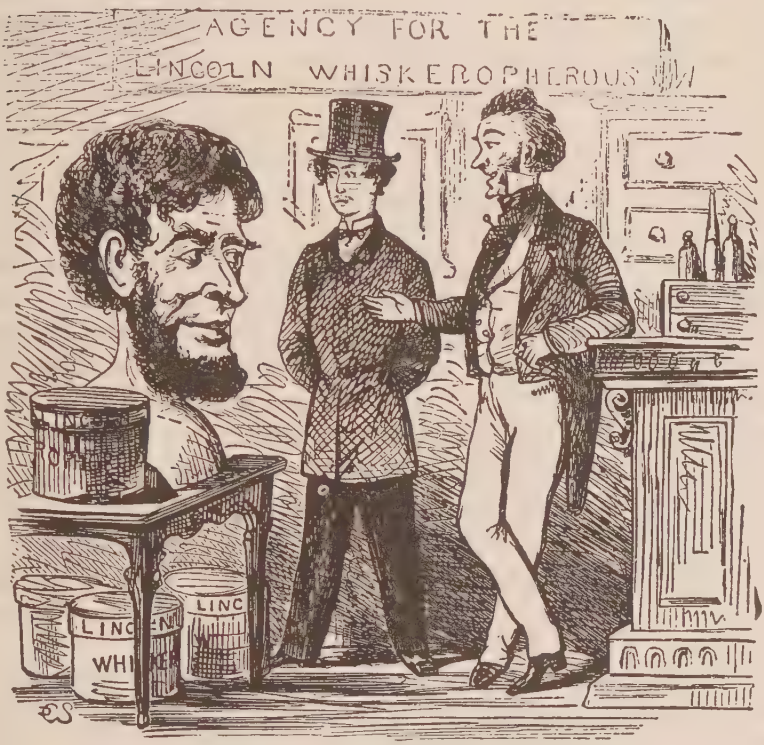
She was a woman elevated for gaze, and could read in the *Chicago Tribune:* "At the rooms of the Wheeler & Wilson Sewing Machine Company, we yesterday saw a superb sewing machine, mounted in a solid rosewood full case, and altogether a bijou of an affair, destined as a present to the lady of the President-elect, and to find a location in one of the apartments of the White House. It is richly silver-plated and ornamented with inlaid pearl and enamel. It is worth the possession of a duchess, and indeed the very companions of this superb machine have actually been finished and sent to the English Duchess of Sutherland, and the Russian Duchess of Constantine. The Sewing Machine is well worth seeing."

In one of the farewell days, as Lincoln was meeting people in Johnson's Block opposite the Chenery House, there came to him an old farmer, in butternut jeans, who had ridden horseback many miles since daybreak. And the old man was bent and worn with age, and nearly blind. He had known the Armstrongs and what Lincoln did for Duff Armstrong. And he came and put his old eyes close to Lincoln's face, peered and studied the lines of the face, burst into tears, and murmured, "It *is* him—it's the *same*." And after mentioning the Duff Armstrong case, he shook the hand of the President-elect and said solemnly two or three times, "God preserve you, Mr. Lincoln."

Smart Alecks came, often committees of them, guffawing at their own lame jokes, with thrusts of familiarity at Lincoln as though they might next be tickling him in the ribs. Whitney saw Lincoln one afternoon, with smiling humor, usher the last member of such a committee out of the door, and Whitney remarked, "I wish I could take as rose-colored a view of the situation as you seem to." Lincoln's smiles had all crept back into the leathery fissures of his face, as he told Whitney: "I hope you don t feel worse about it than I do. I can't sleep nights."

"Lincoln is letting his whiskers grow," men were saying in January. A barber had shaved the upper lip and cheeks, leav-

ing a stubble on the chin. Then along in February the hairs grew without interference on all the areas of the face and neck, except the upper lip.



Vanity Fair smiles amid chaos.

Delusive Druggist.—There's 'is heffigy in wax, sir, wiskers and all. Try one of them pots, and in three weeks you'll be as 'airy and 'ansom as 'im.

Just why Lincoln took to whiskers at this time nobody seemed to know. A girl in New York State had begged him to raise a beard. But something more than her random wish guided him. Herndon, Whitney, Lamon, Nicolay, Hay, heard no explanation from him as to why after fifty-two years with a smooth face he should now change.

Would whiskers imply responsibility, gravity, a more sober and serene outlook on the phantasmagoria of life? Perhaps he would seem more like a serious farmer with crops to look after, or perhaps a church sexton in charge of grave affairs. Or he might have the look of a sea-captain handling a ship in a storm on a starless sea. Anyhow, with whiskers or without, he would be about the same-sized target.

Chapter 164

At sunset on the evening before the day set for starting to Washington, Lincoln and Herndon sat in their office for a long talk. The one older by nine years was still "Mr. Lincoln," and the other plain "Billy." Sixteen years they had been partners, and, said Lincoln, "We've never had a cross word during all that time, have we?" They reviewed old times; the office had been quite a place; they exchanged reminiscences; Lincoln was entertaining and cheerful—but suddenly blurted, "Billy, there's one thing I have, for some time, wanted you to tell me, but I reckon I ought to apologize for my nerve and curiosity in asking it even now." "What is it?" "I want you to tell me how many times you have been drunk."

Herndon felt it a blunt question, made his guess as to how many times, perhaps five or six, he had brought disgrace on the law firm. Herndon expected some kind of a warning. But Lincoln changed the subject. What he had done was to give Billy a chance to say he'd keep sober and be fit for any responsible appointment Lincoln would give him.

Herndon said afterward: "I could have had any place for which I was fitted, but I thought too much of Lincoln to disgrace him. And I wanted to be free, drink whisky when I pleased." One request, however, came from Herndon, that Lincoln would speak to Governor Yates and have him reappointed state bank examiner, to which Lincoln agreed. As Lincoln gathered a bundle of papers and stood ready to leave, he

told Herndon their law partnership would go on, their shingle would stay up. "If I live I'm coming back and we'll resume practice as if nothing had ever happened." He took a last look around at the old office, and Herndon and he walked downstairs together and parted.

In a third-story room over his brother-in-law's store, Lincoln had been hidden away from all callers at such times as he worked on the writing of his inaugural address to be delivered on March 4, in Washington, amid the cannon to be planted by General Scott. Two printers, sworn to secrecy, had set up and run off twenty copies of the address. That was in January. Weeks had gone by. Nobody had told or been careless. The inaugural address text was still a secret. And he had written and placed in separate envelopes copies of speeches he was to deliver on the way to Washington. "I am nothing, the Union and the Constitution everything."

Lamon was called from Danville and told: "Hill, it looks as if we might have war. I want you with me, I must have you." And Lamon was going along, banjo, bulldog courage, and all.

Chapter 165

A QUEER dream or illusion had haunted Lincoln at times through the winter. On the evening of his election he had thrown himself on one of the haircloth sofas at home, just after the first telegrams of November 6 had told him he was elected President, and looking into a bureau mirror across the room he saw himself full length, but with two faces.

It bothered him; he got up; the illusion vanished; but when he lay down again there in the glass again were two faces, one paler than the other. He got up again, mixed in the election excitement, forgot about it; but it came back, and haunted him. He told his wife about it; she worried too.

A few days later he tried it once more and the illusion of the two faces again registered to his eyes. But that was the last;

the ghost since then wouldn't come back, he told his wife, who said it was a sign he would be elected to a second term, and the death pallor of one face meant he wouldn't live through his second term.

Chapter 166

Horses hitched to bobsleds stood with sober and serene faces around the public square that winter the same as other winters. When a bit of warm weather came following a spell of zero, sheets of vapor and heavy haze clung to the prairie, and the horses had hard hauling in the muddy roads. And some farmers, after tying their horses to the hitch rack, threw blankets over the beasts so they wouldn't freeze, while others let their nags stand shivering.

Lincoln took walks alone. Whitney ran across him in a section of Springfield where he had no business, unless to be walking alone. His arms were full of papers and bundles of mail. Where was he going? "Nowhere in particular," he told Whitney.

Clothes, furniture, books, the household goods, were packed in boxes and trunks. The family had taken rooms in the Chenery House; the old cottage home was gone, leased, the horse, buggy, and cow sold off.

At the hotel Lincoln had roped his trunks himself, and had written, "A. Lincoln, The White House, Washington, D. C." on cards he fastened on the trunks.

He was going to the biggest home in the country, the hardest house in the country to live in; the Atlantic seaboard was the front yard, the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific slope the colossal back yard; his body, the feet and mouth of him, would be in the White House, eating three meals a day and taking a bath every so often; but the heart and mind of him would have to be far away, roaming the immense front yard and back yard, where there were boys fighting, girls scratching each other's

faces, children sticking their tongues out and calling nasty names at each other; he was to be the Father; the Red Indians would actually call him the Great Father, negroes would call him "Massa," and punctilious white men would use the address "Your Excellency"; he would be the Supreme Counselor of the American People. "Good God, what a job!"

Chapter 167

A COLD drizzle of rain was falling on the morning of February 11 when Lincoln and his party of fifteen were to leave Springfield on the eight o'clock at the Great Western Railway station. Chilly gray mist hung the circle of the prairie horizon. A short little locomotive with a flat-topped smokestack stood puffing with a baggage car and special passenger car hitched on; a railroad president and superintendent were on board. A thousand people

Great Western Railroad Station, Springfield, Illinois.

crowded in and around the brick station, inside of which Lincoln was standing, and one by one came hundreds of old friends, shaking hands, wishing him luck and Godspeed, all faces solemn. Even Judge David Davis, weighing 350 pounds, wearing a new white silk hat, was a serious figure.

A path was made for Lincoln from the station to his car; hands stretched out for one last handshake. He hadn't intended to make a speech; but on the platform of the car, as he turned and saw his home people, he took off his hat, stood perfectly still, and looked almost as he had at the Bowling Green burial services when tears had to take the place of words. He raised a hand, for silence. They stood, with hats off.

Then he said slowly, amid the soft gray drizzle from the sky, "Friends, no one who has never been placed in a like position can understand my feelings at this hour nor the oppressive sadness I feel at this parting. For more than a quarter of a century I have lived among you, and during all that time I have received nothing but kindness at your hands. Here I have lived from my youth till now I am an old man. Here the most sacred trusts of earth were assumed; here all my children were born; and here one of them lies buried. To you, dear friends, I owe all that I have, all that I am. All the strange checkered past seems to crowd now upon my mind. Today I leave you; I go to assume a task more difficult than that which devolved upon General Washington. Unless the great God who assisted him shall be with and aid me, I must fail. But if the same omniscient mind and the same Almighty arm that directed and protected him shall guide and support me, I shall not fail; I shall succeed. Let us all pray that the God of our fathers may not forsake us now. To Him I commend you all. Permit me to ask that with equal sincerity and faith you will all invoke His wisdom and guidance for me. With these few words I must leave you—for how long I know not. Friends, one and all, I must now bid you an affectionate farewell."

Bells rang, there was a grinding of wheels, and the train moved, and carried Lincoln away from Springfield.

The tears were not yet dry on some faces when the train had faded into the gray to the east.

Some of the crowd said afterward that Lincoln too was in tears, that tears ran down his face as he spoke that morning.

And one of the crowd said there were no tears on Lincoln's face. "But he had a face with dry tears," said this one. "He was a man who often had dry tears."

Chapter 168

Old Abe Lincoln came out of the wilderness,
Out of the wilderness, out of the wilderness,
Old Abe Lincoln came out of the wilderness,
Down in Illinois.

Mrs. Lincoln and the boys, Bob, Willie, and Tad, were on the train.

She noticed her husband's hair was rumpled and necktie disordered as the train was running into a town where he would face a crowd.

He put his hands under her arms and lifted her up on a seat to stand face to face with him; she "fixed him up," straightened the necktie and arranged his hair.

He bowed to ladies at one station, and his *New York Herald* friend wired, "He remarked to the ladies that he was always glad to demonstrate how well he understood the poetry of motion."

At another station he began a story to the crowd, provided they would "not let it get abroad as not compatible with dignity." The train pulled out as he was in the middle of the story. And the crowd laughed to him, "We surely won't tell the story now!"

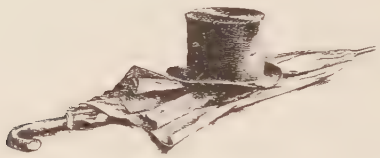
Each mile of the railroad, and every curve, had a signalman. At one bridge a guardsman stood at "present arms" with a musket.

People on foot and in wagons had traveled since daybreak

to see the train pass. A long line of saddle horses at Decatur told of old friends come for a last look.

Tolono station was the last stop in Illinois. There he said, "I am leaving you on an errand of national importance, attended, as you are aware, with considerable difficulties. Let us believe, as some poet has expressed it, 'Behind the cloud the sun is still shining.' I bid you an affectionate farewell."

And there were voices, "Good-by, Abe."



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